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DIARY OF AN IDLE WOMAN IN ITALY.

VOL. I.

DIARY OF

AN IDLE WOMAN IN ITALY.

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ac.

By FRANCES ELLIOT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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WHEN I call these volumes "The Diary of an Idle Woman," I do so because I went to Italy with a perfectly disengaged mind, with no special objects of inquiry, no definite call or profession, no preconceived theories. I was idle in that I went where fancy or accident led me; otherwise I hope my readers will not consider me "an idle woman."

It may be well to mention that some of these chapters (now almost entirely re-written) have appeared from time to time in some of the leading periodicals.

TO

THE DEAN OF BRISTOL

This Diary

IS INSCRIBED BY

"THE IDLE WOMAN."

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DIARY OF

AN IDLE WOMAN IN ITALY.

I.

First Impressions of Rome—St. Peter's—The Corso and the Palaces—The Opera of "Mosè"—Villa Borghese—Making a Saint—The Capitol and Tarpeian Rock—San Paolo fuori le Mura.

I LIKE Rome less than either Florence or Venice at present—*mais voyons*, I have not been here a week yet. It is sad, however, to find imperial Rome only a third-rate modern city!

I retract: I have seen more, and Rome is not a third-rate modern city. It has many and peculiar beauties, putting aside all considerations of art or historical antiquity; but, like the heroes of pagan fable, its nobler features are marred by faults, defects, and blemishes which, when considered alone, seem fatal. It presents a strange medley of the grand, the beautiful, the rich, the great, with dirt, ugliness, squalor, and vulgarity. I have seen St. Peter's, and, truth to say, am sorely disappointed! To arrive there

I passed through some of the vilest streets I ever traversed, streets recalling nothing but the thoroughfares of St. Giles's. The dirt, the filthy population, the crowds of soldiers, the street-side kitchens, where fish, flesh, fowl, and fruit are all frying in the open air, form so disgusting an *ensemble*, that one feels almost ashamed of being seen on foot in such a bear-garden.

St. Peter's is not situated, as I conceived, *in* the city, but in a distant faubourg, at a considerable distance from the Corso; and to reach it these wretched streets must be traversed. Then comes the Tiber, a respectable river after the shallow Arno; and the bridge of San Angelo, swarming with crowds of passengers, carts, carriages, and waggons,—a modern jumble utterly at variance with the exalted state of enthusiastic expectation with which one desires to approach that renowned sanctuary. The Castle of St. Angelo, about which one has indulged in such romantic ideas, is an ordinary round tower, surmounted by a brazen angel. In looking at it I quite forgot all about Hadrian's tomb; for, size and massiveness apart, one never would notice this fortress. For some distance I followed a dirty suburb, redolent with truly Italian odours; and at last, dusty, weary, and already disheartened, I found myself opposite the great basilica.

This first impression was one of disappointment. From the immense size of the colonnades, and the rising ground on which the church stands, the whole appears unaccountably small—much less imposing, indeed, than our own St. Paul's. But the fountains are lovely—of all fountains in this city of flowing waters the grandest and the purest.

As I mounted the steps and approached the façade glowing with expectation and eager curiosity, I was dismayed at its smallness and the utterly unecclesiastical appearance it presents; for it looks more like the front of a nobleman's mansion than a church. The square windows, stone balconies, and short pillars are principally to blame for this. The vestibule, in shape like St. Mark's at Venice, strikes the eye, already accustomed to the colossal proportions of the whole, with no particular wonder. I draw aside the mat that covers the door—I enter—alas! it is all gold, glare, and glitter; all garish sunshine; no columned aisles, no "dim religious light," no painted-glass windows; but all gorgeous flaunting colours, such as I have ever disliked in the Genoese churches. It is a style I detest, and not all the magnitude of the proportions, not all the *prestige* of that magnificent shrine, can reconcile me to a style fit only for a church-upholsterer arranging an ecclesiastical drawing-room.

Oh! give me rather—ten times rather—that chaste, solemn *duomo* of Milan in all its marble purity! Give me that forest of stone, where the eye wanders confused from one marvellously-clustered pillar to another, springing aloft in snowy splendour to the delicately-fretted roof! Give me those awful windows whereon are so skilfully represented the mysteries of our faith, casting down such broken and mysterious light on the aged monuments around!

This ran through my mind as I advanced up the nave of St. Peter's, drawing nearer to the hideous *baldacchino* in the centre.

All here is bright and glaring; all looks modern, and of that most offensive period, the bad French style. Not even the absurdly grotesque black statue of St. Peter sitting in a chair, with his foot extended to be kissed, looks classical, and I could not get up enough faith even to believe it a genuine Jupiter.

The tombs of the Popes are, for the most part, in execrable taste, and put me quite in good-humour with our own monstrosities in St. Paul's.

There are no pictures over any of the numerous altars (in Italy most disappointing), but in lieu of them wonderfully beautiful mosaic copies of celebrated originals. Still, admirable as these are as specimens of skill, there is a sameness about stone copies quite

wearisome as one wanders from one altar to another. The finest mosaics struck me as those in the corners of the dome representing the Four Evangelists; there is a spirit and action about them far superior to the glazy look of the copied pictures.

Under the *baldacchino*, against which I have declared eternal war, is an open vault railed round, down which one looks upon what the faithful believe to be the tombs of SS. Peter and Paul—an arrangement precisely similar to the tomb of that good, excellent San Carlo Borromeo at Milan (who really was the best of modern saints), with this notable difference—that his body really lies visibly interred in the sepulchre, whereas here, perhaps, the simple unit 0 expresses the contents of these tombs! Around the space burn innumerable golden lamps.

All the choir was blocked up with boards, and carpenters and lampistes preparing for a *fête* next Sunday, when the Pope is to elevate a new saint into the celestial hierarchy.

I have here given my sincere impressions of St. Peter's; and I believe it is only want of moral courage that keeps a great many from saying much the same. I declare, from henceforth I shall cherish a much profounder respect for St. Paul's, seeing that in many respects it is superior to "the most glorious temple

ever raised to religion," as Gibbon, to round a period, chooses to say.

Having so much abused the dirty streets, I must do justice to the grandeur and magnificence of the unique Corso—nearly a mile in length—where the eye wanders from palace to palace in a maze of astonishment as to what size the next stupendous structure will attain. Aladdin's palace, with its four-and-twenty windows in a row, would be quite put to the blush beside those amazing edifices that call the Doria, the Torlonia, the Schiarra, master. Less gloomy than the palaces of either Florence or Venice (which have a repulsive prison-like aspect, spite of great picturesqueness), they exceed all others in size, splendour, and number. There is more poetry about those beautiful *cortili* at Genoa, where the orange-trees, the fountains, and the flowers blend into the façade of its palaces, giving them a touch of Moorish romance. There is a majesty in those huge mediæval piles at Florence, mounting so high in air as to obscure the very sky—such palace-dungeons as the Strozzi and the Pitti, with the heavily-barred windows; there is a look of French elegance, repair, and finish about the Milanese palazzi, with the *soupçon* of gaudy hangings and rich furniture within; and, last of all, there is a charm peculiarly their own, Byzantine, eccentric,

strange, about the picturesque abodes of dear sweet Venice, with their long ranges of windows and heavily-sculptured façades looking solemnly down in the bright sea, and the great water-gates with the gondolas waiting. But all and *every*, beautiful as they are, and grand each in its peculiar style, cannot match with these unrivalled palaces that follow each other in rapid succession along the Roman Corso, unaccountably uniting the finest points of all the others. This is indeed "a street of palaces, a walk of state;" and as the moon rose and touched the great piles with her silver light, I gazed in rapt wonder at the mighty monuments of mediæval feudality around me. Names such as the Colonna, the Doria, the Borghese, are noted in the aristocracy of the universe, and their homes are commensurate to the world-wide fame attained by their historic names. If Rome possessed but this one street it might be called imperial.

The shops are Parisian in their elegance and display. Splendid vehicles chase each other along, and crowds of pedestrians fill the remaining space, recalling the busiest thoroughfares of Paris or London. Here and there a piazza opens, with its lovely fountain, the splashing waters deadening the surrounding noise. All the world knows how Rome is famous for its

fountains, but no description can do justice to their number and beauty.

To-night at the opera to see *Mosè*. The theatre was the Argentina, and a dirtier house and more abounding in bad smells I never entered. The music is grand, but *furieusement rococo*, or, as the Italians have it, "*troppo usata*." One recognised here and there tunes of absolute antiquity. The libretto is painfully impious—quite a scandal in this city of priests: it would never be permitted in London. Moses descends from Mount Sinai, bearing the commandments in his arms, and there is the voice of the Almighty behind the scenes in recitativo. The plagues of Egypt were also touched upon, and the darkness admirably done. The entire house was black as Erebus, and the wailing of Pharaoh's court very characteristic—it was really "a darkness to be felt." The whole wound up by the stage being converted into the Red Sea, represented by green calico. The *Israelites*, safely grouped on a pasteboard rock above, surveyed the destruction of their enemies, who disappeared from mortal ken in an incredibly short time under the calico, whereupon the curtain dropped.

I have been much struck with the pensive, solitary beauty of the Villa Borghese, embosomed in its dark ilex woods, with the spreading pine here and there

cutting the landscape, and giving a peculiar and classical character to the scene. The fountains breaking the long vistas through the woods have a charming effect, and are the only artificial feature in an essentially natural whole. Such views, too, towards Albano and Frascati, deepening with rich purple light, are never to be forgotten. The villa itself is a somewhat mean building for such extensive grounds, but rich in treasures of sculpture.

I was particularly delighted with the Apollo and Daphne of Bernini, one of the most lovely statues I ever beheld. The transformation of Daphne is given with marvellous truth. She is already enclosed within the trunk, which seems to be mounting, as it were, momentarily to her breast. Her hair has already thickened into leaves; the fingers are sprouting with wonderful truth; and her toes have turned earthwards in tiny, delicate, rooty fibres and strings. There is, too, a certain air of desperate satisfaction in her countenance as she feels her escape from Apollo insured; and yet she is, as it were, still flying on the wings of the wind, though only half animate. Apollo is by no means to be compared with the nymph. There are many other fine sculptures, but nothing impressed me like this.

Pauline Borghese, as the Venus Vincitrix, is too

Frenchified and artificial for my taste, and looks unpardonably unclassical.

There is a melancholy grass-grown square behind the house, with fountains surrounded by double rows of ilex, very suggestive of malaria, I thought.

To-day, Sunday, the 13th November, I saw the process of making a saint in the nineteenth century, or, speaking more correctly, raising a fresh aspirant to the celestial peerage—an edifying sight, truly! At three o'clock we went to St. Peter's, the road from the bridge of San Angelo being beset with cavalry, whose numbers increased as we approached nearer the church. The central space in front was crowded with all classes hurrying onwards up the great steps into the vast *sala* before them, where his Holiness that day "received;" for St. Peter's looks no more like a church than "I to Hercules."

So immense, however, is the edifice, that inside there appeared but a sprinkling of people, great as was the crowd. A fine mellowed light prevailed at the hour of the setting sun. The windows, too, had been partly covered with draperies that cast a rich tinge around.

Extending from the Chapel of the Sacrament towards the altar was a double file of soldiers, mixed with the grotesque Swiss guard stationed at intervals. It was an odd thing to see the military introduced fully

armed in the very house of God, and argued a strange state of government, under which the Pope could not visit St. Peter's in safety without their protection; but so goes the world at Rome. After a due proportion of waiting, Pius IX. appeared, surrounded by his tonsured court, slowly advancing through the lines of military, who, presenting arms and falling on their knees, woke the deep echoes of the great building.

I stood close to the temporary altar of crimson velvet and gold where the Pope performed his devotions, and saw him admirably. He is a fat, benevolent, soft-looking man; his expression decidedly prepossessing, but at the same time essentially priestly. His hair is quite white, and he altogether looks older than I had expected. He was dressed principally in white, with a slight mixture of red. A priest, or page, held up his rather short petticoat behind and displayed his legs, which looked absurd. The cardinals and monsignori in red, and the canonici in purple, also repeated their orisons. I thought them a singularly vulgar-looking set. After his Holiness had said his prayer, he rose and proceeded to the altar behind the central *baldacchino*. The apsis or choir had been elaborately decorated, and presented a gorgeous *coup d'œil*. Hundreds of splendid glass candelabra were suspended from the top to the bottom of the walls;

drapery covered all the intermediate space; while at certain distances large pictures represented the notable actions of the hero of the day. In the centre of the choir, immediately over St. Peter's chair, in a gigantic gold frame, was displayed his portrait, illuminated from behind. I have seen the Scala at Milan, and many other gorgeous opera-houses, but I never beheld one to compare with this, which resembled nothing else, however—the choir being the stage, and the Pope and cardinals the actors, with ourselves, the mighty mass of spectators, the audience.

As a spectacle, it was beyond words splendid. Millions of candles light up the space now dimmed with the falling day. After the Pope has proclaimed from the altar the name, style, and title of the new beatificato, which was duly recorded on parchment borne by his attendants, he slowly withdrew, casting blessings around as he passed along, which were received, I thought, with tolerable indifference. A small book was thrust into my hand, purporting to be a life of the new saint, a curiosity of superstition, containing accounts of his supposed miracles, which I took the liberty not in the least to believe.

I then went to look at the statue of St. Peter (*alias* Jupiter), and scarcely recognised my worthy friend in his holiday garb: he was arrayed in robes of crimson

cloth of gold, draped regally about his sable person. The tiara, with its triple crown sparkling with jewels, adorned his head, and a ring of enormous size appeared on his finger. Whether in this guise the image looked most hideous or ludicrous it would be hard to say, but a more grossly grotesque object I never beheld. If it is not image-worship for the people to kneel down and kiss his toe, and pray before him, I know not what is. It was a grievous, shameful sight, that grim idol, decked out like a frightful black doll, to be kissed and adored!

The view from the Capitol is all that Murray says, and gives one in five minutes a clearer idea of ancient Rome than any description. As a view it is marvellously varied and beautiful, more picturesque than any other city. The seven hills, to common, ignorant souls like myself, are all myths; for hills there are none, except the Quirinal, Cœlian, and Pincian, with the little mound on which the Capitol stands. But how many things one sees in Rome that are respectable only for their names! The Tarpeian Rock, for instance, is a very disappointing place, a mere garden on a shelf of hillside, from which one looks down into a mean little court surrounded by poor houses. I don't see why *this* spot is particularly to be fixed on more than any other portion of the rock on which the Capitol

stands: the people of the garden of course are positive on the subject, as it brings the *quattrini.* Then the clamorous little beggars, and the steps down into the piazza on the Capitol—how steep, dirty, and disagreeable! All the world knows *the thing* in the Museum is the Dying Gladiator—a most wonderful statue indeed; the very life seems ebbing out of the marble—actually dying, and grieving over approaching death. It has more expression than the Apollo, that being a spiritualised statue of a god—this a mortal man, full of the passions and sufferings of humanity. A bust of Julian the Apostate struck me vastly, as bearing just the restless, cunning, unsympathetic countenance I should have fancied; yet with this cunning and restlessness is blended a strange look of dignity, for he, too, was a nephew of the great Flavian. There also is a horrid statue of the Infant Hercules, a swollen, puffy abortion, like an Indian idol—in green bronze too!

An old beggar came limping in, although the custode would fain have excluded him; also a Roman *contadina,* who frankly confessed, "Ma guardo e guardo, ma poi non vedo niente." She and her companion soon settled down in deep contemplation of a much-mutilated bronze horse, excavated from some part of the city near where they lived, which pleased them far

more than all the rest. They hung about the custode like bees around honey, and he made himself great in their ignorance.

There are some charming pictures on the opposite side of the building. Guercino's "Sibylla Persica" is here; also a splendid picture by him—the "Glorification of Santa Petronilla," warm, rich, and Venetian. Some wonderful works of Garofalo's, too, an artist one can only know at Ferrara and Rome, who unites the grander colouring of the Venetian to the conception and drawing of the Tuscan school. The more I see of his works, the more I admire them. The Paul Veroneses are fine also, and placed so that they can be seen, which is an advantage wanting in some of his best works at Venice, where, from the bad light in the churches, they are nearly invisible.

The whole drive to San Paolo fuori le Mura is deeply interesting. After threading dozens of labyrinth-like streets, the road all at once emerges on the broad, majestic Tiber. (N.B. I am fresh from Florence and the Arno.) To the right stands the graceful little temple of Vesta, chaste and refined in aspect, as her temple should be. Below is another ancient temple, that of Fortuna Virilis, which the guide-books extol, but which I could not help thinking heavy and clumsy. Then there is the Ponte Rotto, now a spruce iron

bridge. Standing on this bridge, one sees to the right the island of the Tiber, with two ugly old Roman bridges, dear in the eyes of antiquarians, connecting it with the town on either side, which rises in domes and campaniles, and piles of quaint old buildings along the river-side. Beyond the temple of Vesta is the church of the Bocca della Verità, so called from an old masque of Pan with an open mouth, into which the fingers of any one suspected of falsehood were introduced, in the belief that the stone lips would close on them if the person lied. It was a temple dedicated to Ceres, and is now surmounted by a fine Gothic campanile in galleries. Behind, the scene is closed by a high hill backing all. A procession issued out of the church, with lighted tapers, and a priest under a dirty umbrella, going to administer extreme unction to a dying person. Down dropped all the people on their knees. Among the crowd were some gentlemen, who took especial care to cleanse their nether garments afterwards with handkerchiefs.

A long, flat drive brought us to the church, which outside makes no particular show, standing as it does so badly; but, on entering, what words can describe my astonishment at its stupendous size and splendour? The marble columns of the nave, placed like those in Santa Maria Maggiore in the true basilica style, are

surpassing in beauty, size, and proportion, melting into the distance most sweetly. Over the apsis and tribune are superb mosaics, fresh and gorgeous, and exceeding in beauty even those of San Marco at Venice. The light, too, here falls on them so well. I say nothing of the marble, the Egyptian alabaster, and the malachite all round. One gets used to these material displays of magnificence. Under the altar has ever been the traditionary burial-place of St. Paul; but how his body can be here and at St. Peter's, and his head at the Lateran, I leave for Catholics to determine. A miracle, I presume, will settle the question. This convent is so dreadfully exposed to the influences of malaria that the monks can only reside here for six months in the year. They had just returned when I went there.

As we returned to Rome we entered it by the fine old gate of San Paolo, which has something, I think, to do with Belisarius. There is a splendid old bit of wall too, with high ruined turrets, like an enchanter's castle,—to what age belonging I have no idea. I never volunteer any description of the Roman walls, although, as antiquarians are so uncertain about them, I might as well venture my opinion. The Pyramid of Caius Cestius close by is as ugly as any other pyramid.

II.

The Portrait of the Cenci—The Ruins of the Palace of the Cæsars, and Sermon at the Coliseum—Rospigliosi Palace—The Cardinals' Fête—Churches of the Trastevere and Corsini Palace—Solemn Benediction at San Gregorio — Colonna Palace, Gardens, and Ruins—The Conservatorio Rooms at the Capitol—Church of Ara Cœli—Party at the American Embassy—Villa Lodovisi.

NOT one of the innumerable copies gives any idea of the pensive, supplicating look of the Barberini Cenci, that sweetest and prettiest of all Guido's heads. She looks into one's face with an expression full of plaintive anxiety, as if excusing her dreadful crime, and imploring pity and love in a way that quite brings tears into one's eyes. The painting bears evidence of having been finished in haste, particularly the background, which gives it an additional air of reality. A portrait, said to be of her mother-in-law, hangs beside her—a hard, brazen-faced Italian dame, redolent of intrigue. Then there is Raphael's "Slave" close by; a charming picture, full of effect, but not of his usual effect—more like a Murillo or a Titian—the dress

Eastern and picturesque. *She* is a fair beauty, while by her side hangs the naked portrait of his own Fornarina, with a bracelet bearing his name on her bare arm—a bold, staring thing, with vicious eyes looking out of their corners at one—as a painting, infinitely inferior to that divine portrait of her in the Tribune at Florence, where the same face and form are transformed into a Juno of majesty and beauty. All these treasures are in one small whitewashed room. Indeed, the whole "gallery" is contained in two rooms. In the second are pretty things of Albano's, representing Diana; but I grow weary of his affectation.

It is impossible to imagine such a confused mass of ruins as the so-called Palace of the Cæsars on the Palatine Hill. I felt disgusted with myself for not being able to make anything out until I saw that Eustace says it is impossible. Great shapeless walls, ugly and unpicturesque, with deep subterranean supports, in the way of underground passages and chambers, are all one sees after mounting a number of steps to a platform laid out as a market-garden. The view is alone worth the trouble, with the Coliseum close in front, and the Baths of Caracalla on the Aventine Hill opposite. Ruins in the midst of ruins, which, seen near, are but wretched skeletons, though imposing at a certain distance. The way up to the

Palace of the Cæsars is through a narrow door in a row of stables. Madame Besançon, the Florence milliner, was flaunting about the ruins with a party of young French *grisettes*.

Next day, the 4th of December, was beautiful. I went down to the Forum, and, entering the large gate on the right-hand side, under the Palatine (on the opposite side by which I had mounted yesterday), ascended by a fine double flight of steps to a balustraded terrace on a level with the Palace of the Cæsars; in fact, a portion of the same ruins. Ruins, ruins, nothing but ruins, of no shape or form, but absolutely fragments. Where stood the house of Tiberius (said to have been in this direction, but which he could have but little inhabited, never remaining long in Rome) is now a peaceful lettuce-garden, terminating on the brow of the hill in a pretty thicket of ilex, waving in the breeze like a crown of classical laurels. In the centre of the garden are the so-called Baths of Livia, a subterraneous apartment to which I descended by a flight of steps, which the guide lit with torches. There are two small lofty ante-rooms, and then the bath, a well-proportioned apartment of small dimensions, with slight remains of having been faced with marble and ornamented with frescoes. The bath itself is only large enough for one person; the ceiling above is arched.

No light, of course, comes from without, the whole being underground. I confess I felt the place stuffy and unpleasant, and was but little interested. I suppose I am wanting in archæological proclivities, for these antiquities simply bore me; so much so, indeed, that I did not even care to inspect the excavations more recently made by the Emperor of the French.

Afterwards I went to the Coliseum, it being Friday, to hear the usual sermon delivered there. In a rustic wooden pulpit, raised against the inner wall, stood a tonsured monk, dressed in brown, with a cord round his waist, who preached in Italian. Around him was grouped a numerous auditory. Beside the pulpit leant another monk, and below, several members of a *confraternità*, their faces completely covered, with only apertures for the eyes and mouth, dressed in light drab stuff. Up and down the central walk sauntered some English strangers. A group of Roman women, with their picturesque linen head-dresses and red petticoats, placed themselves in attitudes full of unaffected grace about the steps of the large crucifix in the centre. The preacher, in a fine sonorous voice, addressed himself directly to the audience, discoursed of heaven and hell, and reminded them every word and action was recorded by the avenging angel, and that the Christ suspended by his side in the pulpit, on coming a second

time, would judge, not pardon sinners. It was a scene for a painter. The sun shone brightly, and the blue sky peeped through the arches above.

In this vast amphitheatre, which had once rung with cries of "The Christians to the beasts!" where the venerable Ignatius and thousands of other holy martyrs had been torn limb from limb amid the howls of insensate pagans, that same Christ is now proclaimed by the voice of a humble monk, while around lie the ruined temples of the gods with scarce one stone upon another! There was a great silence; no one spoke but in whispers, for every soul united in the universal, all-powerful feelings of the moment. Whatever might be the difference of creed, here was our common Lord, our common Saviour, our universal Judge!

To-day (December 10th) I visited the Rospigliosi Palace, situated within a large *cortile* on Monte Cavallo, planted with dwarf acacias. It is of immense size, more like a huge hospital than a private residence. The porter had great difficulty in preventing our paying a *bonâ fide* visit to the princess in our earnestness to discover the *carte du pays;* but at last we were set right, and, turning to the left, ascended a flight of steps leading into a small but beautiful and highly-cultivated garden, full of orange-trees and delicious roses, and great heaps of mignonette. In the

central room of the Casino, at the extremity of the garden, is the celebrated "Aurora," of which no copy can possibly render with justice the original. But why paint those exquisite masterpieces on ceilings, where one breaks one's neck looking up, and then never sees them properly after all? There is the same difficulty in the Sistine Chapel, where Michel Angelo's wonderful frescoes are comparatively lost from the position. Really it is barbarous. But here, the loveliness of the Hours who can tell?—loveliness for every taste—features in every mould of beauty. Not less lovely is the back of one delicious head with exquisitely fair braided hair blown by the winds, which seems to flutter as though one heard the whistling breeze sweeping high up among the great mountain clouds.

But really such an ugly *he* among such heaven-born *she's* is too bad. I must unconditionally quarrel with Phœbus, who has a most inexpressive face, something like a shaved woman! which I account for by the fact that Guido, from a constant habit of painting women, could not adapt his soft pencil to the manly conceptions of a Titian or a Vandyke. Moreover, the hair of the god of day is so light that it might pass for grey. But away with criticism; it is an immortal work, and Aurora really does look so flying on the ambient air, one fancies each moment she will glide away and dis-

appear like the bright vision of a rainbow. Her face is of a bold, decided cast, wanting the delicate loveliness of the attendant Hours—her action grand and majestic as she cleaves the air in her course with all the bearing of a goddess. Her saffron robe, rounded by the breeze, harmonises grandly with the golden clouds behind her, as though she too were clothed with no meaner garment than the gorgeous vapour. Still, one regrets that her figure should be so pressed against the edge of the picture, thus curtailing the effect that would have been insured by a greater height of background. The principal figure is thus, on a first glance, but a secondary object, and it is only after some moments, when time allows one to concentrate in some degree the admiring confusion of a first view into a steady gaze, that one contemplates her with sufficient attention. The bold shading of the horses is masterly; they actually appear as if rising from the ceiling, so admirably are the bright lights thrown in.

The exquisite landscape under the clouds is not the least striking portion of the whole. There is a sea with white lateen sails dotted about here and there, bordered by mountains of the deepest Mediterranean blue. I could believe I was gazing on some lovely "bit" in the Corniche Road between Nice and Genoa, much diminished by distance, the colouring and outline

are so to the very life. To the left comes a charming little touch of landscape, with dark outlying trees, suggestive of the deep mysteries of some pine forest. It reminded me a little of that most wonderful of all landscapes forming the background of Raphael's "Vision of Ezekiel" at Florence, breathing the very essence of that motionless, silent repose spread over all nature at mid-day, when dreams and fancies arise in these burning latitudes. The room was crowded with copyists—vain labour to endeavour to reproduce forms and shades struck off in the happiest *furore* of genius, when engaged in a task peculiarly sympathetic! Guido himself could never have copied that fresco, of which every touch was an inspiration.

There are some very interesting pictures in the adjoining rooms. In the left-hand room, some fine heads by Rubens, who is always grand when he is not gross; and a curious portrait of Poussin, by himself, who, true even here to the deep green shades distinguishing his paintings, has sacrificed his vanity in order to represent his face and person of the favourite tint, and appears, in consequence, a very livid, unearthly individual. Here, too, is Guido's famous "Andromeda," which, I confess, disappointed me, simply because the copies exactly resemble it; indeed, they are, barring the originality, quite as good. Her attitude is affected,

like the Andromeda of a ballet; the sea is a vast mass, "without form and void;" and the monster is not nearly horrible enough for the occasion. The only one of the *dramatis personæ* I like is Perseus, who really is flying down from above in good earnest. The "Triumph of David," by Domenichino, tells a sad tale of the decline of art, being quite of "the silver age," as Gibson called it. I was vastly pleased with the "Death of Samson," by Caracci, in the opposite room—a sublime picture, though deficient in colouring. The long arcade of the portico losing its pillared distance in the background—the prostrate figures in front howling, open-mouthed, in agony—the statue of the pagan god still erect and untouched by the falling columns—Samson himself, with upturned sightless eyes, sinking down overcome by his gigantic effort—beyond, and seen under the arches, the banquet where Delilah is seated, who raises her hands while the other Philistines rise in horror—brings the whole drama vividly before one. Indeed, the sensation is that of giddiness, for all about seems falling also along with that great portico.

High up and ill seen is one of the loveliest of Albano's pictures—"Diana and Endymion," gazing at each other from opposite sides of a river; beyond is a wood, an Italian wood, black and shady, as of ilex, while here and there, among the trees, bright silver

lights appear like gleams of crystal, giving an inconceivably fine effect to the whole. No earthly lights seem these, but rays from the goddess herself, playing around her ere she sinks to rest, and under her crescent symbol "sleeps with Endymion."

Two new cardinals have just been made, which event has given occasion to one of those grand public receptions peculiar to Rome, as they both kept their state together.

All the way to the Doria Palace, where the *soirée* was held, the streets were lined with soldiers, both horse and foot; while near the entrance, in two open galleries erected in the street, were military bands playing alternately; so, what with the music, the torches, the crowd, the carriages, and the flashing of the arms and uniforms in the dark night, it was altogether as stirring and gay a scene as could be. A long suite of grand apartments, well lit up, was thrown open. After traversing some half-dozen, where stood servants, chasseurs, and *camériers* at intervals, each murdering one's name more cruelly than the other, as it was passed from mouth to mouth, the reception-room was at length reached—a saloon blazing with light. On one side of the door stood the reverend pair in whose honour modern Rome put on her gala dress—very grand in red and purple; on the opposite

side appeared the Princess Doria, splendidly dressed in pink and diamonds, receiving all comers. Grandly courtesying, she received each party as they advanced, announced by the extraordinary names and titles the imagination of her Italian servants supplied. The room was crammed, and the heat intense. Numbers of English were there when I entered; indeed, at that hour, the majority were English, as the Italians came later. To hear the hissing of the Saxon tongue one would have imagined oneself anywhere but at Rome.

The Via Appia, or Street of Tombs, is one of the grandest sights in Rome—an appropriate and affecting approach to the gates of the fallen mistress of the world; like her, in absolute ruin, but majestic in fallen state. Much as I had read and seen of this approach, the solemn reality far exceeded my expectations. Extending in a straight line from the tomb of Cecilia Metella, the long vista of ruins stretches for miles over the desolate Campagna; stones, towers, monuments, shapeless masses, lie piled on each side, forming an avenue of ruin impossible to conceive. Beneath is the original Roman pavement, and very bad and rough it is. Then there is such an enchanting view of Rome and its ancient walls, the aqueducts stretching across the plain for miles and miles beyond the Apennines, ending in Mount Soracte, shaded in every colour from

purple to pale yellowish pink. In front lies Frascati, nestled in the folds of the mountains, and dotted with forests and villages; above is Albano; while around extends the long level line of the Campagna, that earthen Dead Sea—calm, immovable, interminable, and looking equally accursed.

Yesterday I made a tour in the Trastevere, lying beyond St. Peter's, under the Janiculum. It is not in the least like Rome, but has a peculiar, indescribable look of its own. The principal streets are long, broad, and straight, while some of the smaller and more distant quarters are dangerously solitary. I confess I could perceive no difference in the physiognomy of the people. High up to the right, on the top of a steep ascent, stands the church of San Onofrio, with its surrounding colonnade. There is a venerable yet romantic look about the place which is very pleasing, and the view of Rome from the terrace before the entrance is quite magnificent—grander far than from the Capitol. I think imagination run wild could scarcely conjure up a more varied and magnificent panorama.

Beside the church is a solitary garden planted with solemn old pine-trees, where it is said Tasso, after his escape from Ferrara, loved to roam. At present it is remarkable as THE spot for viewing St. Peter's, standing full of majesty below in all its vast proportions.

The church of San Onofrio is in itself small and insignificant, save for its antiquated air. In the tribune are some lovely frescoes by Peruzzi. Most particularly beautiful is one in the centre, representing the Virgin and our Saviour enthroned. They are surrounded by a circle of deep blue clouds; her robe is of the same tint, also the mantle around the Christ, relieved below by the delicate pink of his other drapery. This deep blue is full of character, mysterious and grand. Above are frescoes by Pinturicchio—angels dancing and playing on instruments—all of surpassing grace; while above, under the form of an old man with outstretched arms, appears "The Eternal." Here, too, is a charming dewy Correggio, besides some other good frescoes. The tomb of Tasso is surmounted by a mean profile likeness in oils, set in a medallion—a miserable daub, which the friars themselves say is no likeness. This tomb is a disgrace to Rome. In death as in life, Tasso seems fated to neglect and contumely, and whilst Ariosto and Dante boast the proudest monuments, he alone is left without a fitting memorial. The frescoes of Domenichino outside the church, under a colonnade, are faded and poor.

Santa Maria in Trastevere, a grand basilica, stands in a piazza, with its usual accompaniment of a lovely fountain. There are some curious frescoes outside, of

the twelfth century—the Virgin on her throne, with female saints on either side, crowned and bearing basins streaked with blood, marking them as having been martyrs. The interior is solemn and sombre, and of fine proportions, consisting of parallel rows of columns up the nave, great single blocks, with a high entablature above. There was an excessive air of devotion among the people present, who looked savagely at an intruder, while a sulky old sacristano would not give me any information—a rare thing in polite Italy. These are Trastevere manners, I suppose.

The apsis is considerably raised on steps; around are many curious old monuments; everything, indeed, looks as antique as if no one had touched the place since the time of its founder, Julius I., in 340. It is said to have been the first church where service was ever performed. Numbers of popes have restored and embellished it. Over the apsis are some fine mosaics—Christ and the Virgin enthroned, in the Romanesque style, which makes their relative position very remarkable; then there are popes, apostles, and prophets *à l'ordinaire*. Kugler says, "The release from the trammels of the Byzantine school is here apparent, and they may be considered the first purely Western work of a higher order produced by Italian art."

I call this a terrible church. It quite frightened

me, it looked altogether so stern. I wouldn't sleep in it for the fortune of Torlonia. I am sure the martyrs walk about with their heads under their arms. There is an elegant chapel designed by Domenichino, with an angel on the ceiling which he has left unfinished. All that brings one face to face with these great masters in "their habit as they lived" is interesting.

Santa Maria dell' Orto is situated in an out-of-the-way corner, between high walls with palm-trees and oranges peeping over—a very convenient place to be robbed in. I had immense difficulty in getting in, as the sacristano is deaf, and had gone aloft to wind the clock up. His daughter, a slatternly young damsel in slipshod shoes, called and screamed, "Papa, papa!" to every note in the gamut, for a long time addressing only empty air. At last, when the clock was wound, down came the old man, and the door was opened. This is a beautiful church, quite a small St. Peter's, covered in the same style with the most precious marbles, and designed by Giulio Romano in admirable taste. One cannot say if it be large or small, so perfect are the proportions—quite a gem of architecture. It is called Dell' Orto from a miraculous picture behind the altar, found in a garden, the spot being marked by a stone, with an inscription, in the centre of the church. How strange to find such a shrine hid in an obscure

forsaken corner—the cloisters, too, occupied as a manufactory of tobacco!

I next drove to Santa Cecilia, built on what *was* the house of that interesting personage; standing back from the street, in a large *cortile*—a low, quaint old building, something like a barn decorated with columns. Her life, under Catholic handling, has become a pretty legend. In extreme youth she was converted to Christianity, but, notwithstanding, was forced to marry a pagan. A vow of chastity prevented her consenting to live with him as a wife, which her husband much resented, showing his displeasure by conduct marked by savage brutality. But her sweetness and resignation overcame him, and he learnt to respect without understanding her resolve. At this period he was visited with a dream. He imagined he was in heaven, where his hands were joined to those of his wife by angels, who crowned them both with roses and lilies. His brother Tiberius, entering his apartment soon after, asked from whence came the delicious odour of flowers he perceived. So great an impression was made on them both by this circumstance, added to Cecilia's entreaties, that they became Christians.

The prefect of Rome soon discovered their altered sentiments, condemned St. Cecilia to be stifled in her bath, and her husband and brother-in-law to be deca-

pitated. In a side chapel is shown the identical bath where she was condemned to suffer martyrdom. It has evidently been an ancient bath-room, and is exceedingly curious. There are still the remains of the leaden pipes, and the spaces and holes round the walls for the evaporation of the steam. This dates back as early as A.D. 230, she having been among the early martyrs.

But the beauty of beauties is her monument under the high-altar, sculptured by Maderno, an artist who assisted Bernini in his additions to San Pietro. The saint is lying as in an open coffin, precisely as her remains were found when, after miraculously escaping death by suffocation, she was beheaded. The face is turned away, giving a sweet curve to the neck, a little band encircling it so as to conceal the severance; the body, delicately small and fragile; the pretty feet bare—all, as it were, twisted into a strange form, as if flung negligently into the grave. The body is covered with grave-clothes, save only the head and neck; the former is wrapped round with a cloth. To give an idea of the affecting and exquisite beauty, the *deadness* of the whole figure, is impossible. I could have gazed upon it for hours.

St. Cecilia, as patroness of music, is all-glorious in Raphael's divine picture at Bologna—young, fresh, glowing, her face upturned with an inspired look, while in her hands are the keys of an organ: a most sweet saint.

Nuns inhabit the convent opening from the church. They live under the strictest rules. They *never* are to be seen, but fly from gazers, and sing in a gallery surrounding the church behind a gilded screen. Many of them (the female custode said) are young and beautiful.

I could not conclude my tour in the Trastevere without a visit to a magnificent edifice, the Corsini Palace, whose only fault is its situation. Still, such a building lends dignity even to a suburb.

The carriage enters a double *cortile* surrounded by pillars, open on one side to the garden, ascending the steep side of the Janiculum, which rises abruptly behind. One is deposited at the foot of the great staircase, which, after the first flight, divides majestically, and so mounts to the upper story, producing a noble effect. On the first-floor is the gallery, entered through a fine large hall, where the different doorways are screened with the Corsini arms, richly embroidered on velvet. The gallery is immense, consisting of at least ten large rooms filled with pictures; but, on the whole, not an interesting collection. There is a great deal of trash, and too little variety; especially an overabundance of enamelled, affected Carlo Dolces and *maniéré* Carlo Marattas—the latter, especially, all as like "as two peas," for one sees his wife's face in every picture, always turned the same way, and with the

same head-drapery. This monotony is very wearying. Both these painters belong to the second or silver age in painting, after the pure gold of Raphael, Titian, and the elder masters had been exhausted. There is one fine dewy Carlo Dolce—a Virgin and Child, much superior to many other of his works here. The Corsini appear to revel in a perfect indigestion of Carlo Dolces, for the gallery of their Florence place is full of his pictures. There is his celebrated "Head of Poetry," which, truth to say, looks ill, thin, languid, to my mind, afflicted with rather weak eyes.

But to return: here are some fine Guercinos, specially a head of Christ crowned with thorns—*horribly* beautiful—some bluish Caraccis, and some pale, inexpressive Guidos. Strange that an artist who *could* paint so divinely should condescend to produce such meagre shadows as these. Never did genius display a greater inequality. Among a multitude of uninteresting and feeble landscapes are some interesting ones by Poussin and Salvator Rosa. A number, too, of Dutch pictures are here—Boths, Berghems, &c. But I hate this low-life school at all times, and most of all in dear, romantic, poetic Italy, where such a style is an abomination. There is a fine portrait of Philip II., our bloody Mary's poor, pale, lean tyrant, by Titian, and others of great interest and immense value

as paintings by Albert Durer, Vandyke, Rubens, &c. Two pictures by the latter are especially fine, showing how well he *could* paint when not indulging in exaggeration and coarseness. Luther and his wife are curious as portraits. She is hideous, which makes his marriage all the more pardonable, as he never, most assuredly, induced her to break her vows for the sake of her beauty. Luther is a fat, jolly friar, with a double chin, a vulgar face, and stupid expression.

The so-called gem of the collection is a Murillo—a very ugly Virgin (more than commonly homely and uninteresting *even* for him) sitting with the Infant Saviour against a sun-baked wall. The colouring is superb, but the subject—the lay figure—atrocious.

What kings and princes are these Corsini, to possess two such palaces, one darkening the Lung Arno at Florence, with a superb gallery of paintings also; and this overgrown, monstrously fine place at Rome, with dozens of splendid villas in Tuscany and Romagna to boot!

The other day I went to the church of St. Gregory the Great, to see a certain abbot-elect of some place in England solemnly blessed by Cardinal A——; a grand affair, to which one was admitted by printed invitations, as if it had been a ball.

The morning of the ceremony was one of the very worst of the year—a pouring rain, such as Rome only

can boast—rivers ran down the streets, and water-spouts poured from the heavens. The church of St. Gregory, beyond the Coliseum, is situated in the worst part of the city in point of roads. The carriage sank down in the soft mud, and the horses scrambled over the ancient Roman way under the arch of Titus, as if they intended to lose their legs and deposit us there in the shape of modern ruins. Despite the weather, however, a number of carriages were already assembled at the foot of the handsome flight of steps on which stands the church, in a quiet, sequestered corner near some public gardens, whose groves afford a pleasant shade in a fine day, and enliven a somewhat gloomy position. It is not a large building, and I was disappointed to find the interior entirely modernised. Monsignore T—— received us near the door, and placed us in an excellent position close by the altar. Cardinal A—— soon advanced within the rails, and the organ pealed forth. The robed priests were all at the altar, and such a rustling of silks, and satins, and embroideries—such a display of lace and fine linen never could have been conceived out of a milliner's shop. The abbot-elect undressed until one became positively alarmed at the probable consequences, and I irreverently thought of the clown at Astley's; but, as in the case of that personage, the contingency had been duly pro-

vided against; and, much as was taken off, still more remained behind. The poor man must have narrowly escaped suffocation in his original state. As to the cardinal, he peeled repeatedly in the course of the morning, and underwent the most marvellous transformations. He began in black, changed into red, and finally came out very splendid in purple. How all this was managed I cannot say; I can only vouch for the fact. He looked remarkably well in the last dress, with a scarlet cap—like an old Venetian picture by Tintoretto; and nothing could be more dignified and appropriate than his appearance as he sat enthroned in a great gilt arm-chair, under the temporary canopy of crimson velvet erected for him. One fat Benedictine monk in attendance on him nearly underwent strangulation in the process of dressing. He could not get into his clothes on any terms, and performed agonising gymnastics, which caused him to look very red in the face all the morning afterwards. Then others could not find the strings to tie on their vestments, and left them hanging down behind on the black *sottane* like untidy schoolboys. Altogether there was no end of confusion.

I never was present at so wearisome a ceremony. It lasted *five* entire hours. I never saw, even in Rome, such walking about, and such extra bowing, and the

same things done over and over again, as if for a penance—and a real penance it was in good truth to me, heretic as I am!

The abbot-elect paraded backwards and forwards within the rails and without the rails twenty times, and put his mitre on and took it off until I actually got giddy. There was a regular ecclesiastical prompter, or master of the ceremonies, who kept everybody in order, making the funniest little nods and subdued gestures, like a well-behaved Neapolitan, as he marshalled them when to sit and when to stand, and if the eternal mitre was or was not to be worn. The abbot-elect (poor man, how I pitied him!) lay flat and prostrate on the steps of the altar for nearly an hour, while the seven penitential psalms were chanted over him. When he got up he looked as if he had but just escaped apoplexy. It was an immense relief when all this tiresome ceremonial was over.

The Palazzo Colonna, like a true Roman house, looks nothing at all from the street; indeed, I am pretty sure that a row of shops are erected in front—stables there are certainly, and a church pushed violently up into one corner. Over this odd medley of buildings are fixed the *stemma* or armorial bearings of the great Colonna. On entering a vast *cortile* the enormous size of the palazzo appears; still, all

jumbled together, and without any regular façade, masses of wall run in all directions, and open into inner courts and all sorts of wonderful places, covering an immense space of ground. Half of the *piano-nobile*, or first-floor, is occupied by the French Embassy; the other half is dedicated to the family and their pictures; and, as both these suites are respectively the finest in Rome, the extent of the whole palace may be imagined. Below, on the ground-floor, was the studio of that charming painter, the Professore Minardi, as well as a military barrack; above, *al secondo*, are the private apartments of the Colonna family; so altogether it is much like a Noah's ark in point of variety. Between the French ambassador and the picture-gallery one common stair is used, leading into a general ante-room of great size, where the numerous doors are all alike covered with tapestry, so that it would be a very pardonable mistake if one walked direct into the presence of the French ambassador. Chance, however, directed my steps aright. The first two rooms are hung with old tapestry; then begin the pictures, of which there is a most pleasing, but not an extensive, collection. In the first room are two landscapes by Albano, remarkable rather for size than beauty; and a Holy Family, by Giulio Romano, where the rich colouring recalls the Venetian school, while the admirable grouping reminds

one of the disciple and admirer of Raphael. Here, too, is a beautiful Paul Veronese, bright, living, glowing. Portraits there are by Titian and Tintoretto, and Heaven only knows how many more. But who can tarry in these chambers with that glorious *sala* beyond, the finest room in all Rome, brilliant with frescoes, paintings, mirrors, chandeliers, statues, marbles, ivory, and gilding, all blending in one great glowing whole, charming and astonishing the bewildered gaze? It was built by one of the family, a great general, who, after a victory gained for the Venetians, as if the palace were not already immense enough, added this sumptuous gallery,

Truly these Italian nobles are lodged like kings of the earth. Palatial architecture cannot be conceived out of Italy. I remembered the words of Gibbon as my eye swept down the gorgeous space, when speaking of the family residences of the Roman princes "as the most costly monuments of elegance and servitude; the perfect arts of architecture, painting, and sculpture having been prostituted in their service, and their galleries and gardens decorated with the most precious works of antiquity which taste and vanity have prompted them to collect." To be sure, this regal pile was raised by Pope Martin V., who, with a proper portion of that family pride for which popes are

famous, wished to commemorate his reign by erecting a palatial residence; for those were days when popes were vastly pushed about and irreverently elbowed, and kept on the trot from Avignon to Rome, with an occasional flight into Spain, by way of change. Martin did, however, remain quietly in the Eternal City after the Council of Constance, and lived to finish this prize palace.

The gallery is more than two hundred and twenty feet long, terminating at the further end in a sort of tribune supported by vast columns, and raised on steps. Within this holy of holies, in aristocratic exclusiveness, are two beautiful Venuses by Bronzino, whom the extreme delicacy of the present prince has caused to be draped with an ill-assorted garment painted in water-colours, and therefore removable. This dressmaking spoils two fine pictures entirely. It would take pages to enumerate half the pictures and sculptures in this gallery. One fine portrait of the poetess Vittoria Colonna is very interesting; and another by Vandyke, of some family hero on horseback, very striking and noble. As to the statues, I am grown difficult after the Vatican and the Capitol, and did not look at them. *The* thing is the superb gallery itself, the *ensemble* intoxicating the eye by a perfect harmony of colour, luxury, size, and grandeur. One of the marble steps is

broken by a cannon-ball that penetrated the wall at the time of the revolution and siege. Prince Colonna has never allowed it to be repaired, and so it stands as a *memento mori*. From a window at the end of the gallery I entered the gardens which occupy the site of the baths of Constantine, on the steep ascent of the Quirinal, and the spot where those splendid horses were dug up that now ornament the beautiful fountain opposite the Pope's summer palace. Very picturesque gardens they are, ascending by double flights of steps through alleys of box and bay, along the margin of trickling streams and gushing fountains, to the hill above, where, from a grand terrace, one looks over Rome.

On this terrace are some gigantic fragments and capitals, said to have formed part of a Temple of the Sun erected by the Emperor Aurelian. But I cannot bring myself to believe that a building of that size was possible in that situation; and, as there is no certain information on the subject, it is orthodox to doubt. Near by, and looking down a place much like the bottomless pit, are some curious remains of baths, now used as a granary, but, like all other classical ruins, vague and indefinite. I poked my head down through an aperture into a deep vault of arched caverns, and I said, "Very curious!" "Dear me, how wonder-

ful!" without a notion why, or understanding in the least what I was looking at.

Behind the terrace is a garden, not quite so ill kept as are Italian parterres in general. Great orange-trees, loaded with fresh fruit, flung back the rays of the setting sun opposite, making one happy by the notion of having suddenly leaped into summer; for in these secluded nooks, embosomed in ilex and bay, within great orchards of the orange and the lemon, not a vestige reminds one of the course of the seasons, and a perennial summer reigns. We passed down a long covered *berceau*, and out through an iron gate opening on the Quirinal Hill opposite the Rospigliosi Palace, and near the beautiful fountain that crests the steep ascent of Monte Cavallo, opposite the Pope's palace. Here Castor and Pollux, in semblance of eternal youth and beauty, rein back their fiery steeds, whilst the lofty fountain rises between, sparkling, splashing, and shedding diamond drops around.

To-day I saw the apartments in the Capitol called the Conservatorio — a noble suite on the first-floor. They struck like a well, and even my Italian companion complained of the cold. The first two or three rooms are finely painted in fresco, the subjects chosen from Roman history. But in a certain corner chamber are collected the precious relics of the city—objects,

perhaps, of greater interest than any others in the world. On a pedestal stands the bronze wolf with the infants Romulus and Remus. Pictures have made this group familiar in the furthest corner of the world, but the original is no less striking. To see the very bronze taken from the Forum, where it was *venerated* as the *genius* of Rome, and to see also the rent in the hinder leg made by the lightning which fell when Cæsar was murdered, is indeed a leap back into bygone centuries, and to feel individualised with their most famous legends. Opposite is a bronze bust of Junius Brutus, with the eyes painted, giving it a curious sinister expression. This had every appearance of an antique head, and of being a strong likeness. To what disputes have this head and the wolf given rise! What volumes have been written *per* and *contra* their originality! For my part, I delight in a most believing spirit, and to receive with faith all the custode tells me. Here, too, are the bronze ducks, with open, quacking bills—images of those that saved the city of the Cæsars. They were dug out, it is said, at the foot of the Tarpeian Rock. Here, also, are the Fastes Consulares, containing lists of all the consuls from the time of Augustus—mutilated, broken, and obscure, yet the only authentic guide that history possesses. Here is also a wonderful head of Medusa by Bernini, fine enough to take the

second place in poetic horror after Leonardo's tremendous painting at Florence.

Nothing I have seen in Rome carried me more back to my early imaginations than the relics collected in these rooms. Here I realised Rome. Fabulous story and far-off history seemed, as it were, within my grasp; the great shadows of antiquity were resuscitated at my individual call.

Afterwards I went to the church of the Ara Cœli, close by, up that long flight of one hundred and twenty-four marble steps overtopping the Capitol, the site of the Temple of Jupiter Feretrius, to see the Santo Bambino. As I was in the company of a devout Catholic, I put on my gravest face—which, however, I found it a hard matter to maintain. We were ushered into a side chapel off the sacristia, where, after waiting some time, one of the monks appeared. We intimated our wish to be presented, whereupon he straightway proceeded to light four candles on the altar, and to unlock the front panel of the altar, out of which he took a large gilt box. The box was covered with common, wearable-looking baby-clothes, which he put on one side. He then placed the box on the altar, and unfastened the lid; several layers of white silk, edged with gold, were then removed, and at last appeared the Bambino, in the shape of an ugly painted doll,

some two feet in length. A more complete little monster I never beheld—the face painted a violent red; the hair, also wooden, in rigid curls; altogether very like one of the acting troop in Punch's theatre. There was a gold and jewelled crown on its head, and the body—swathed in white silk, like an Italian baby—was covered with diamonds, emeralds, and pearls, but of no great size or value; the little feet were hollow, and of gold. Of all sights in the world, the Bambino *ought* to be the most humiliating to a Catholic. The monk said the Bambino was of *cinque-cento* workmanship, which they always do say, *faute de mieux*, and added, with a devout look, "Ma e molto prodigioso." When he goes to the sick, he rides in a coach sent for him, and is held up at the window to be adored. At Christmas there are no end of ceremonies, in which he takes a prominent part. First, the *presepio*, where he appears in the arms of a lay figure habited like the Virgin, while another stands by representing Joseph. But he is very great indeed at the Epiphany, when he is paraded up and down the church, escorted by bands of splendid military music, playing polkas, and then held up at the great door facing the hundred and twenty-four steps, on which the people kneel and worship him! The church of Ara Cœli is immortalised by Gibbon as the place where

he first dreamed his future history. The pillars of Egyptian granite in the nave are all of different lengths, taken from various ruined temples; and everything is ancient, gloomy, and suggestive.

Mr. ——, the present American ambassador, is well known for his urbanity and hospitality, of which I had a sample last night at one of his grand receptions. The night was bitterly cold, but the weather did not prevent a large circle from assembling at his palazzo soon after eight o'clock, the hours at Rome still being primitively early. A large suite of elegant rooms was thrown open, furnished with the *bon goût* and luxury of a Parisian *petite-maîtresse*. Pictures and sculptures adorned the walls in profusion—an evidence, I think, of American taste for art, which leads them to a more general love of the fine *chefs-d'œuvre* executed by their native artists in the usual decoration of houses than we English are accustomed to indulge in.

I was surprised to see that so large a number of Americans were in Rome; there certainly could not have been less than three hundred assembled. The ladies were most elegantly dressed; much more in the true Parisian style, and without that *outré* caricature too usual among ourselves, where a fashion originally pretty is tortured "to very tatters" by a fatal want of

good taste. Such a number of beautiful girls I never, I think, saw assembled together—a book of beauty might have been got up on the spot. They say American ladies' looks are evanescent; perhaps it may be so, for their style of beauty is particularly frail and delicate, making it all the lovelier and more feminine while it lasts. The circle of fair young girls at Mr. ——'s were mostly in the very spring-time of womanhood—sweet, wax-light creatures, like beautiful exotics, looking only too ethereal.

Generally speaking, the American gentlemen are plain and common-looking—defects all the more observable from the high-bred air of their womankind. But there is a charming frankness and a friendliness about them which present a most agreeable contrast to the cold reserve and stiffness of my own compatriots. Several very agreeable ladies spoke to me in the kindest manner without the formality of an introduction—a thing unheard of among our frigid islanders. The way in which we all ate and drank seemed prodigious after the Barmecide entertainments of the Italian nobles, who give one nothing but ice, and that sparingly. There were two regular suppers, and refreshments handed about every moment besides. Altogether, I have not been at a party for an age that pleased me so much; all was perfect, save a

certain twang and drawl, which spoilt many a pretty mouth to English ears.

The gardens of the Villa Lodovisi are decidedly the most beautiful in the vicinity of Rome, situated at the back of the Pincian Hill, close under the walls, and not far from the Villa Albani. On entering, I was astonished at its vast extent; for, in good truth, it is a large park gardenised, affording every variety of shrubbery, parterre, wood, avenue walks, shady dells, and open spaces, *à l'Anglaise*, planted with trees; all overshadowed by the huge frowning city walls heavy with the weight of centuries, indented and arched, with here and there an old tower looming in the background above the lofty trees. Altogether it is a sweet place, with a quiet cloistered air about it, and kept up, too, with a care and tidiness thoroughly English. One might fancy oneself at Sion or Chatsworth but for the sublimer features of the scene. On entering, we passed along a lordly gravel walk bordered by a thoroughly Italian clipped hedge, from which other walks, bordered by other hedges, all seemingly interminable, opened out in every direction, forming charming vistas, and ending in richly-tinted old ramparts, or in some classic temple, or tomb, or statue. The only things wanting were fountains, of which, strange to say, near this city of living waters, there were none to be seen.

The other side of the broad walk was laid out in elegant flower-parterres.

It was quite a Watteau scene, and I expected every moment to see a party of ladies emerge from behind the high hedges, all rouged, and behooped, and bedizened, attended by flights of beaux radiant in powder and pearl white, with rapiers by their sides, enamelled snuff-boxes, fans, or *bonbonnières* in their hands, like a frontispiece to one of Molière's comedies; but no such "*précieuses ridicules*" appeared. There was the scene, the background; but the *dramatis personæ* were all in their graves, and their finery, as well as themselves, kindred dust, far away on the other side of the Alps.

When we reached the end of this approach, there appeared a little hill, which I ascended through pretty trimmed walks, to a charming kiosk at the summit, garlanded with creepers, and hemmed round with great variegated aloes, their fat leaves turned down towards the ground. This was for all the world like a drop-scene in a play—only we, miserable sinners, spoilt the delusion by our modern dresses. Beyond was a noble view of modern Rome; for what view of the imperial city is not noble? At our feet bubbled a small stream into a great shell. Oh, Italy! land of poetry, when can I say I know or can imagine all thy

beauties? Far and near their measure overwhelms me—be it in thy lofty oak-shrouded mountains; or in thy classic villas, created for a race of human beings, free, grand, untrammelled, such as Paul Veronese or Titian called into existence; or amid the gorgeous shrubs and bright flowers which embroider every hillside, and cast sweet perfumes on thy balmy breezes! "Time cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety," may be said more truthfully far of Italy than of poor faded Cleopatra, centuries ago food for envious worms.

But a truce to rhapsody, and hail matter of fact! From the kiosk we descended into a dark ilex wood covering that side of the rising ground. Here were ancient trees, old enough to have been under the same hurricane that marked the hour of Cæsar's murder and clave the bronze wolf on the Capitol. In a dell at the bottom was a tiny lake, surrounding a moss-covered pile of ruined marble, radiantly green, from whence sprang up a liquid jet whose gurgling broke the silence and answered to the breeze rustling overhead. In an open space over this sweet dell, the casino (*Anglicè*, house) appeared, whither the Princess Piombino repairs when she makes her *villeggiatura* and wishes to enjoy the beauties of nature, which the Italians have no notion of doing, not in the very least appreciating

its beauties. The ladies especially, who never go out until the fall of the day, whatever be the season, care as little about the enchanted land, and the flowers, and the fragrant shade, and the delicious breezes, as a Venetian cares for a horse. They never walk, never wander about as we English delight to do, but order their carriage, and where that carriage cannot take them they never go. The casino is rather an ugly building, without the slightest pretension to anything except comfort. Within the inner hall are the famous frescoes of Guercino; his "Aurora," and the "Night and Morning." The "Aurora" is, alas! but a milkmaid after Guido's goddess, and the black and brown piebalds but Flemish dray-horses in comparison with those ethereal steeds that skim through the azure main on the ceiling of the Rospigliosi saloons. However, it is a fine work, and has great force and justness of colouring. The various figures, too, emblematic of night, disappearing in different discomfited attitudes behind dark lowering clouds, all flying at the approach of day, are beautifully conceived. On either side of the hall are the figures of Night and Morning, both too well known to need more than a casual mention. I admire them much. The dead, heavy sleep of the one, whose eyes are closed over a manuscript she holds in her hand, while the owl, the night birds, and

the sleeping child all tell of repose around her, contrasts capitally with the joyous, merry freshness of Day spreading his wings to the morning beams with a soul-inspiring glee, full of youth, of hope, of promise. Other frescoes there are, landscapes of Domenichino and Guercino, no way remarkable except for the excessive greenness of the former's colouring—a defect I had already observed in his frescoes at the Farnese Palace.

The house is a centre from which innumerable walks radiate through the delicious groves around. Before it wave great trees of cypress, tall and funereal as fancy can desire, mixed with immense solemn pines, whose twisted, knotted branches spread out in strange agonised shapes from the lofty trunks. High hedges border all the walks, lending a mysterious air to the grounds, suggestive of romantic meetings, and escapes, and assignations. Such hedges as these, tell-tale, hollow, and treacherous, must have divided Louis Quatorze from the still innocent La Vallière, when overhearing her confession of love and admiration in the gardens of Fontainebleau. Oh, it was a rare scene here, in these lovely gardens! I could have wandered there for a whole livelong day.

One walk there was under an avenue of dark ilex trees, forming a sombre shade, through which a stray

sun-gleam came straggling in as if by chance. Beyond was grass, over which the great boughs feathered down, lending a solitary, lonely character to the scene. On the other side the great *Muro torto* bounded the view, lit up by the sun. This walk was interminably long —two miles, I should think—diversified by temples and statues at intervals as it wound round the base of the walls. We followed it to a part of the grounds bordered by low houses for preserving the orange-trees in winter, on one side; while at the other the wall had been turned into a kind of greenhouse for flowering plants, whose blossoms peeped out prettily between the rents time had made in them. The walls of ancient Rome, and a modern conversatory! I thought of what Hamlet says:—

> "Imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,
> Might stop a hole to keep the wind away!"

The past and the present jostle each other strangely in these classic spots.

Time would fail me, and my reader's patience, if I told all the wonders of this enchanted ground, beautiful as the "delectable country" in "Pilgrim's Progress." There were caves deep down, bordering pretty small lakes overshadowed with willows; rising hills and descending valleys, clothed with whole acres of lilacs, arbutus, laurel, magnolias, oleanders, and sweet-scented

trees. Then there were bridges—some rustic, some architectural—and paths winding down among verdant artificial woods, bordered by plantations of huge grotesque aloes, with thorns quite suicidal in length and sharpness. A large park-like space opened out here, planted with firs, and crossed by roads, along which the meek mouse-coloured bullocks pulled classically-shaped carts. Finally, we emerged from this charming labyrinth into a great broad walk, screened with high hedges of cut cypress, advancing and receding in rounded folds, looking in the distance like rich green velvet, so smooth and bright. The sun, now really setting, came stealing through in long, slanting, golden rays across the verdant mass, chequering the walk and deepening the shadows.

Two or three other large casinos in the grounds we did not see at all. But we were allowed to enter the sculpture-gallery, where I saw an immense deal of modern restoration, and very little original antiquity. Some of the statues are interesting, but not many. One, which I took for Virginius in the act of sacrificing his daughter, whom he holds by one hand, proved to be a Gaul slaying no one knows whom, and so I lost my interest, particularly as the figure is altogether modern. Here is a good Bernini, "Plutus carrying off Proserpine," only she fights too much *de bonne*

foi to be graceful, and he looks too satyr-like to be interesting. Still there is great power in it; and I recognised the same master-hand that called the "Daphne and Apollo" into life. There are some curious old Termini, almost the only originals in the collection.

On the whole, I never spent a pleasanter day than at the Villa Lodovisi, wandering in its lovely groves.

III.

Audience of the Pope—Villa Doria Pamfili.

I AM just returned from an audience of the Pope, and sit down to write with all my impressions fresh on my mind. Two days ago a Papal dragoon made his appearance at my door very early in the morning, before I was up, to the infinite alarm of my Italian maid, who thought he had come to arrest me. He only bore, however, a very peaceable intimation printed on an extra large sheet of paper, notifying that I was to make my appearance at the Vatican, dressed in black, on the following Sunday at three o'clock.

Sunday came, and with it, in the morning, our English service, whereat seven hundred "*heretics*" offer up their prayers in every variety of fashionable silks and satins, with unmistakable Parisian bonnets *en suite*. The walls of the "upper chamber" appropriated by the "Protesters" of the nineteenth century are painted in a style apparently for making it look as little like a church as possible. Everybody stares with that

insolent knock-me-down air considered indicative of high *ton* by English *alone*, the manners of all other nations increasing in courtesy precisely in proportion to the rank of the individual. In good sooth, we are fearfully and wonderfully made, specially on the Continent.

By three o'clock I had dressed myself *selon les règles* for presentation to the head of the rival establishment, viz., in black, with a veil over my head *à l'Espagnole*— a very becoming *coiffure* by the way, which must, I think, have been introduced by Lucrezia Borgia or some other ecclesiastical belle, as being the prettiest and most taking costume her fertile imagination could devise. Up we drove to St. Peter's, where those glorious fountains shoot up in masses of molten silver towards the bright sun, typical, in their transparent purity, of the faith which martyrs on that very spot have sealed with their blood. I was afraid I was late, and so hurried along the marble corridor and up the regal staircase which extends from the colonnades to the interior of the Vatican. The quaint Swiss guard were lounging about and talking some utterly unintelligible *patois*. These men are regular "*bestie*," as the Italians say, and cannot be classed under any denomination of Christians; they have scarcely the attributes of humanity, and only understand *la raison*

de la force, being gifted with particularly sharp elbows, as every one who has ever been jammed into a church crowd in St. Peter's or the Sistine Chapel knows to his cost. At the top of the steps stood a servant in crimson livery; a little farther on, another. All things have an end—so at last had the climbing up-stairs. I found myself landed in the first room of the picture-gallery, where San Romualdo and his companions are represented as ascending still farther *en route* to heaven in voluminous white dresses. Here, however, I was kept waiting at least an hour, and so had abundant time to observe the crowd of ladies and ecclesiastics amongst whom I found myself landed. There was a group unmistakably French—two ladies as coquettishly dressed as black would allow, with veils which displayed rather than hid their faces. With them were two gentlemen, who fidgeted incessantly, used their handkerchiefs like minute-guns, and took snuff by handfuls. The ladies rattled away incessantly, like true Frenchwomen. Bless their souls, how they must talk in their sleep! Next to them was a party as decidedly English; they laughed and nudged each other, and made fun of everything, were very ill dressed, and seemed utterly out of place. Then came a whole circle of French again, with two abbés and a small round boy, coloured in the face like a rosy

pippin. These people had brought some excellent jokes along with them, and laughed so long and loud, the walls must have been scandalised, the priests heartily joining in the fun. Certainly the vicinity of the Holy Father had no effect upon them, nor were they sobered by the presence of two nuns or pilgrims who sat motionless beside them. These were two young creatures of most interesting appearance, with white cloths wrapped closely round their faces, precisely as the early masters, Perugino and his predecessors, represent the Mater Dolorosa. They wore dresses of dark brown stuff, with girdles of coarse knotted rope; crosses suspended round their necks, and coarse sandals binding their naked feet; in their hands they held broad-brimmed straw hats. I understood that they were destined to some mission in North Africa. Poor things! what devotion such a life requires! Immovable they sat, like monumental effigies, and as the deep shadows fell on the delicate face of the younger of the two, and a slight hectic colour flushed her ivory cheek, she looked like some pre-Raphaelite saint listening to the preaching of an Augustine or an Ambrose! I wonder what they thought of the world and its vanities in the person of the French lady, flourishing an embroidered pocket-handkerchief and rattling her jewellery.

Dr. Johnson says, "An hour may be tedious, but

never can be long"—a proposition I utterly controvert, for I found that division of time allotted to waiting exceeding lengthy. I grew so cold and chilled, I felt actually turning into stone. Still no summons came. I looked at the pictures. Opposite to me was a large fresco representing Sixtus IV. giving audience to some mediæval gentleman devoutly kneeling—a delicate hint to Protestants present "to go and do likewise." I got quite angry with a bonneted Doge of Venice by Titian, simply because I could not help staring at him, and, in fact, hated all the *chefs-d'œuvre* around, being in a very sulky humour. When hope seemed quite vain, and after even the pilgrim nuns had moved the quintessimal part of an inch, steps were heard approaching; the curtain over the door was drawn aside, and the Pope's private chaplain, Monsignore A——, advanced into the room bareheaded, magnificently attired in light purple robes, with a great cross embroidered on his breast. Grand and courtly in bearing, fresh and handsome of features, he might have sat to Titian, and been admired as one of his happiest subjects. Making a general bow to the assembled company, who rose at his entrance, he pronounced the name of the French party and retired, they following him. Next were summoned the noisy priests, quite quiet now, and the little boy, cowed into good behaviour by the appa-

rition of Monsignore. Next my "*rispettato nome,*" as the Italians have it, was uttered, and I made my exit through two or three empty rooms. Before entering the audience-gallery, called Degli Arazzi, from the glorious tapestries that hang along the walls, designed by Raphael, Monsignore A—— instructed me how to behave, and made me take off my gloves, which are never worn in the presence of Papal royalty. Beside the door stood another valet in crimson. A bell rang, and I was told to advance. Pius stood at the top of a long gallery. On entering I knelt; on advancing to the middle of the room I knelt again; and at last, on arriving before him, a third time I knelt. All this is difficult to execute decorously. The aspect of the Pope is extremely benignant and pleasing; a halo of kindness and benevolence hovers around him, and the sweet smile on his calm, composed features immediately prepossesses one towards him. As I made the allotted genuflexions he seemed to wave his hand as though deprecating the formality, and bidding me freely advance. He looked almost pained at being approached so ceremoniously. On reaching his feet, at the third genuflexion, he presented me his bare hand, and I kissed a splendid ruby ring which he wears. Gregory, the late Pope, desired and submitted to having his foot kissed, the orthodox salutation at Papal audiences; but

the amiable Pius prevents even such an attempt by frankly stretching forth his hand at once. He was dressed entirely in white, with a small cap on his head, and shoes of red, bearing a cross embroidered in gold, and stood beside a table at the top of the room. His white robes hanging in heavy folds around him, the tapestried walls of the gallery, his grave and immovable attitude, one hand resting on the table, altogether conveyed the idea of an historical picture more than an actual scene. He addressed various questions to me respecting my own family affairs, and listened with interest to my replies, first asking me in which language, French or Italian, I could most easily express myself. His voice is soft and musical, as all know who have heard how sweetly he chants the high mass at St. Peter's; and his manner is full of paternal kindness and affability. "*Nella gioventù,*" said he, "*e' è sempre vanità; le tribolazione vengano da Dio; pregiamo dunque che siano sanctificate per voi.*" ("Youth," said he, "is full of vanity; misfortunes, though grievous, bring us nearer to God; let us pray, therefore, that your own may be sanctified to you.")

After some further talk he graciously dismissed me with a sweet smile, saying, "*Figlia mia, io ti benedico;*" upon which he again gave me his hand, which I of course received and kissed kneeling, as is the etiquette,

and forthwith retreated, the Pope sounding a small hand-bell, on which the closed doors were swung open. It is an extremely nervous operation to retire backwards, as one is in full view the whole time.

I returned with the most agreeable impression of his Holiness, and quite able to understand what Count L——, of the Guardia Nobile, felt when he said, "I love Pius far more than even my own father."

Among all the villas I have seen, none have charmed me like the Doria Pamfili. On entering the great gates, three separate roads diverge in different directions through dense avenues and woods of ilex. In a dreamy and melancholy state of mind—for I had been vexed in the great city below—I chose the central one. I went on until I found myself in an open park, undulating in graceful lines, and rising into rounded heights crowned with wood, from which descended little valleys and deep nooks, black with shade, all sheltered by big weird pine-trees, whose brown and naked trunks stood out clearly against the blue sky; for it was a mellow, bright day in the early spring. Tracks, rather than roads, broke the verdant carpeting all around. From the summit of one hillock, and under the shadow of the overarching ilex branches, a sweet prospect opened out towards Albano, with the long solemn line of the Campagna stretching away to Ostia,

and that now untrodden shore where once mighty vessels rode superbly at anchor, bearing those Roman or Carthaginian warriors whose footsteps trod in blood. From the hillock I perceived a garden beneath me, and the casino, or house, with its high terrazzo. I descended into the garden, and wandered about as if under a magic spell, for not a soul, not even a dog, was to be seen, and no sound broke the musical murmur of the fountains in their marble basins. Great plots of ground filled with waxy camellias, some pure white, others rosy red, peeping out from the rich shining leaves: beds of violets of every hue made the very air heavy with their sweet perfume—odours all of Araby the blest. Beside them grew long rows and plots of oranges, laden with that same glowing fruit which must have tempted our first mother, rather than the pale apple, in the gardens of Paradise. Anon I mounted a double flight of steps, by a great stream spouting out from some marble devices of dolphins and sea-gods, and reached an upper terrace-garden immediately under the casino. The sun's rays here, in January, were oppressive, and the thousand orange-trees dotted about and ranged against the baking walls rejoiced in the heat, opening their golden bosoms to be warmed by Phœbus himself. In the depths of the wall were cool seats, and purling fountains dashing down

through creepers, and moss, and plants, and disappearing one knew not whither. Hard by, to the left, long flights of steps led from the hill above down lower than the garden where I stood. Along the ridge of this hill grew the sacred ilex-trees; in the lower garden were the flowers; and as their sweet breath uprose to greet me, visions of angels radiant with celestial brightness, ascending and descending, seemed to glide before me.

I left the solitary garden where Nature reigned supreme, and reached a large green plateau occupying the summit of the gentle eminence. Here the pine wood stretched away into dells and vales far beyond, leading the eye through perspectives of unspeakable beauty. The grass was dotted with the loveliest flowers: anemones of all colours, the snowy leaves shading into red, and purple, and pink petals; star-like crocuses with yellow hearts; pink hepaticas; and bold, stalwart daisies, like young sunflowers, courting the invigorating heat — a carpet fresh from the woofs of heaven, embroidered by Nature alone, and scented by the spirit of morning with her balmiest breath.

The house contains a few pictures and some solemn statues; but above, from the terrazzo, whither we were led by an antiquated crone, may be seen the most wondrous panorama that ever greeted human eyes.

Below stands the great basilica of St. Peter's, within whose walls one tries to think repose all that is mortal of that often erring but attached disciple to whom Christ intrusted the spiritual keys; its colonnades—its fountains—its courts—its pillars—its vast dome—revealed in all their immense proportions. Heavens! what a noble sight! Behind uprose the stern solemn line of Mount Soracte, standing alone like an island on an earthy ocean, disdaining its Alpine fellows, who cluster and crouch together on either hand, leaving it in solitary grandeur. Then there is Tivoli, wrapped in the Sabine Hills as in a mantle, their summits covered with snow, glistening in the sunshine far up in the azure sky. Then a deep valley, and further on lie Albano, and Castel Gondolfo, and Rocca di Papa, and Frascati —each like a white blossom nestling in the purple mountains; and then the long straight line marking the sea-shore, and the bright mystery of distant ocean beyond all. What a circle of loveliness! What a zone of beauty!

Afterwards the hobbling old woman led us to some Roman tombs in a sequestered grove beside the Casino Colombarie, deep underground, where the ashes of the dead repose in urns placed in little cells built in the wall like pigeon-holes, green, damp, and decaying, full of corruption and the dust of centuries. Ruins were

heaped around, and wild roses with pale blossoms waved over the tombs of the past.

Through a long, long vista was a modern tomb, erected by Prince Doria to the French troops shot in these grounds. Perhaps it is the spirit of these unfortunates that sheds such a melancholy over the scene, for here death reigns rather than life, and tombs are more numerous than the living. The old crone seemed to be the only living thing in all the place.

Further on yet, I came to a deep green dell, shut in by ilex woods and rising hills, where three separate fountains sent forth their silvery streams in varied devices of tiny, bright, thread-like jets, or in large, gushing volume. There they gurgled and splashed to the spirits enshrouded in those mysterious trees, and the moss grew unchecked over their marble basins. Lower down flowed a river on whose banks willows grew, sweeping their trailing boughs into the still water.

IV.

Italian Interiors—Churches: San Lorenzo in Damaso; San Marco—Baths of Caracalla—The Opera.

TO us prejudiced islanders there is nothing more uncongenial and incomprehensible than domestic life in Italy. In high society there is sameness and monotony all over the world, and good breeding, whether in London or Rome, teaches people to tone down and subdue all outward demonstration to the recognised standard of aristocratic reserve. In company, the fiery Italian becomes composed, the loquacious Frenchman silent, and the thorough-bred Englishman doubly impenetrable. But at home, nature peeps out undisguised, and one sees and hears of funny things occasionally.

The Countess G—— had a husband—a good, quiet man, who gave her no sort of trouble; indeed, she was apt to forget his very existence occasionally. This forgetfulness was carried so far, that in course of time she picked up a cavalier, who turned the honourable duo of matrimony into the dishonourable trio of

cicisbeism. The Italian husband cared very little about the matter, and the household went on harmoniously as before. In course of time the lady grew weary of her extra spouse, dismissed him, and took another. The quiet Italian husband remained impassible, until he found that cavaliere the second, of a more excitable and unaccommodating nature than his predecessor, upset the domestic economy of the house, and, in particular, kept the dinner waiting. This was an unpardonable delinquency; and the husband, now awake to a sense of his wrongs, piteously complained to a friend in these terms:—"My wife's first cavaliere," said he, "was a gallant uomo — un bravo ragazzo. I rejoiced to see him. But this, her second amico, is a *birbante*. Since he has come, there is no comfort at home. I wish he were away, and the first back again. Bisogna che ne parlo colla moglie. She shall dismiss him, or we must separate. I must have my dinner at the proper time." These are facts, strange but true, and indicate an odd standard of public morals.

Other things of a droller complexion often occur, when the singularities committed, however suspicious, are entirely innocent. The Marchesa R—— is a woman about forty, of most pious sentiments, and a devoted invoker of the whole circle of saints. She regularly

says her prayers by the calendar, and follows the *quarant' ore* into the obscurest churches. Her abode is an old tumble-down palace in the environs of the city, where she lives on a mere nothing, happy as a queen. The rooms are unencumbered with carpets or furniture, the only superabundance being frescoes, and great gaunt arm-chairs keeping guard along the walls in grim and gloomy state. Fire there is none, even in the depth of winter, that being considered a useless and unhealthy luxury by Italians.

The other day I went to see her, and was ushered into the bare reception-rooms by a ragged boy and a dirty woman. Her niece advanced to meet me, and, after the usual greetings and extravagant expressions of joy considered an indispensable welcome in Italy, she said her aunt was ill in bed, but would receive me notwithstanding. I was led into an immense room, equally devoid of furniture, save a small iron bed standing in the centre, without any attempt at curtains. Here lay the marchesa in a rather dirty nightcap; while at the other end of the room, to my astonishment, appeared a priest dressed in a black *sottana*, amusing himself with a dog. I was about to retreat at this strange apparition in "my lady's chamber," when she called out a cordial "Buon giorno," and begged me not to mind Fra L——, who was her priest,

and didn't signify. She then presented us. I sat down beside her bed, and the friar returned to his amusement with the dog. After we had talked some time, she requested him to come nearer and join in our conversation, which he did, seating himself, *sans cérémonie*, on the marchesa's bed. She did not look the least surprised, and the good man, who had a most amiable and innocently grave expression of countenance, appeared as unconscious as a child. After we had chatted for some time I withdrew, wondering within myself what I should next see to astonish me in the penetralia of an Italian interior.

One side of a spacious piazza is occupied by the spreading façade of a magnificent palazzo, within whose arched and wide-extending *cortile* deep shadows come and go as the light shoots fitfully down. That palace and *cortile*—designed by Bramante, uncle of Raphael —and the broad staircase descending into it from the first floor, are noted among the bloodiest records chronicled by the historic muse as the scene of a fearful tragedy, too recent, however, in the memories of men to have acquired the same degree of superstitious awe imparted to deeds of murder mystified and deepened by uncertainty and the legendary horrors of long years of fearful remembrance. On those stairs was Count Rossi assassinated—into that *cortile* his

mangled body was thrown—and out of that door was he borne, unshriven and unsung, to his long home. Included in the façade is the church of San Lorenzo in Damaso, also built after the designs of Bramante. This church is an exception to the generality one meets with in Rome, being dark, gloomy, and sombre. A vestibule forming the first division, with its low, rounded arches, is Gothic in style. Here are two altars—on one side that of the sacrament. The sun was shining gloriously outside when I entered, making the deep gloom and mystic repose of the church all the more striking. The transition was like passing into another and a holier world—light, atmosphere, colouring, all were different. The sunbeams found their way aslant through a crimson curtain to the sacramental altar, tinged, as it seemed, in their roseate rays with that divine stream which links our souls to Him who, by the shedding of his precious blood, opened that river of living waters along whose current our frail souls can alone hope to reach the heavenly country. There was an indistinct mist over the remainder of the church. Groups of kneeling figures, clustered round the various altars, told their beads under the deep shade of the heavy pillars. A monk, a nun, bowed in devotion, were here and there dotted about among the crowd, their long black or brown robes giving them a ghostly,

solemn look, as of dwellers in the tombs rather than flesh and blood. The central portion of the church becomes modern Italian in architecture, with the exception of a reminiscence of the Milanese churches in the side aisles extending round the high-altar, the outer wall being ornamented with sculptures and frescoes. There is the same peculiarity in the church of St. Lorenzo in Milan, standing within the time-battered and scathed columns of Roman origin that Napoleon has so carefully supported and riveted, thus enabling them to stand a few centuries longer. The Milanese church was, I believe, also designed by Bramante, that wondrous architect whose very name sounds noble as his works. At the extremity of the side aisle, near the high-altar, is a monument to the memory of the ill-starred Rossi, executed by Tenerani, with a bust in the centre full of individuality and power, underneath being an inscription simply recording his miserable death. Tenerani must have laboured *con amore* for his unfortunate compatriot, Rossi and himself being both natives of the marble-girt town of Carrara. In the sacristy—within which there were assembled about thirty priests, all talking and laughing, offering an unpleasing contrast to the calm repose of the worshippers without—is a fine statue by Maderno of San Carlo Borromeo, that saint of saints, whose memory

Rome carefully cherishes. No other monument struck me as remarkable.

Gay, light, graceful, and elegant is the beautifully-proportioned church of San Marco behind the Piazza di Venezia, at the top of the Corso. Rejoicing in the richest marbles, bathed in the bright sunlight, all here is gloriously gorgeous. Elegant pillars of a precious and beautiful red marble support the entablature, behind which are piers of a pale grey marble, affording a background and a relief to the brighter colour, delighting the eye by the charming contrast afforded by the harmonious blending of the two shades. The entablature above is brilliant with frescoes; the side altars radiant with every device and ornament, monumental and artistic; all, however, adapted with admirable taste, and forming a whole magnificent, but not meretricious. In its style San Marco is perfect, and did Rome not possess such inexhaustible treasures in the way of churches, an edifice like this would be celebrated as it really deserves. But what is mere decoration, however admirable, in comparison with those immortal works of genius that, on bare and unadorned walls, bring thousands from the uttermost parts of the earth to gaze and to admire? There are some mosaics of the stiffest and most deplorable Byzantine pattern, unutterably

hideous in their dolorous, long-faced rigidity. Pictures there are, too, but of no great interest. It is the whole —the enfire effect—that makes this church so striking.

After passing the Coliseum and proceeding along the Via di San Gregorio (so named from a church built on the spot where once stood his ancestral palace) through the arch of Constantine, there is not a step without deep interest. The soil turns up rare marbles of every variety. Colombarie constantly occur, and ruins crop out in all directions—in the midst of vineyards, at the cross-roads, or incorporated into modern buildings; while gigantic cactuses and smooth-leaved orange-trees peep over the high walls, with here and there a solitary palm-tree rising out of great plantations of enormous reeds. Nothing can be more gloomily solitary than this district of ancient Rome—more suggestive of the past glories of her fallen state. One treads the soil, feeling that an Apollo or a Venus, or perhaps more inimitable treasures than the Belvidere or the Medici, lie buried under one's footsteps.

After proceeding about half a mile along these *lugentes campi*, a huge, far-spreading mass of ruins rises abruptly into sight, elevated on slightly rising ground, looking much like the broken walls of a feudal castle, the rents of time causing the isolated fragments to stand singly forth like turrets, embattlements, and

tottering towers, holding on to the decrepit mass by wide Etruscan-looking arches, formed of great blocks of stone—a strange, shapeless pile, on whose frowning surface the ivy and clematis embroider themselves in waving patterns, wreathing with annual freshness the sharp hard lines cutting against the deep blue sky. The carriage turned up one of those odd Roman lanes bordered by high walls, that look as if they *could* lead to nothing but a rubbish-heap or a horse-pond, and yet which conceal such treasures scattered along their sides. In a few moments we were under the shadow of the great ruin, and after desperately ringing at a wooden portal, at last found ourselves in the roofless but majestic halls of what once were the Baths of Caracalla. Certainly it is the only Roman ruin above-ground worthy of competing with the Coliseum, and may, perhaps, be preferred by those admiring a ruder and more chaotic mass of positively fabulous extent. All is desolation. One's footsteps echo mournfully under the great arches—grass grows in the vast halls—shrubs and creepers tapestry the roofless walls—wild roses blossom in the place where emperors have trodden. Still, all is grand and majestic in decay, and I felt positively overwhelmed by the stupendous ruins. One immense hall opens into another through gigantic arches in endless succession. After passing through

several, a great space, too huge to be called a hall, is pointed out as the swimming-bath, with a small apartment in one corner used formerly for dressing, where now remnants of heads and cornices, capitals and pillars, lie collected. From hence we mounted a staircase in one of the towers, repaired on the ancient model, with such high precipitous steps that there can be no disputing the fact of the length of classic Roman legs; I would only recommend any antiquarian troubled with a doubt to try for himself. From the summit I looked down among the ruins below and around me, and traced the once splendid halls where the barbarous Caracalla and the luxurious Heliogabalus had whiled away their vicious idleness. On a level with me were arches and turrets, and great isolated masses of the outer wall, huge and shapeless as though an earthquake had tossed them. No one who has not seen it can conceive what a stupendous ruin it is. Here Shelley meditated amid the silence of the past; nor was it possible for ancient Rome to offer a more melancholy and solemn retirement for a poet's musing place. In the spring-time the winds breathe soft and low in mysterious whispering sounds, their violence tempered by the solid walls, while the sun casts bright lights and shadows, and generates a delicious temperature. A fine view of the distant city is obtained

through an arch in the outer wall. To the left stretches the level Campagna towards Ostia, broken only by the great arches of the Claudian aqueduct and by the lovely basilica of St. Paolo fuori le Mura, like a mourning bride, desolate and forlorn in the fever-stricken plain. On descending, I passed into another immense hall, under arches expansive enough to span a river, where are some wonderfully-preserved mosaics near the wall, marking the place of the private baths for the use of the emperors and greatest patricians. These mosaics (once, perhaps, trodden by the wretched tyrant Caracalla himself, fresh from some horrid murder, his hands stained by a brother's blood) are as bright as ever. Around the walls, midway, are the remains of a gallery, whence the combats of the gladiators were viewed by the court whilst the deified monster bathed. Then comes the vast Pinacotheca, or library, with niches for shrines and statues, the soil still upheaved and broken on the very spots where were found the Farnese Hercules and famous Torso of the Vatican; and how many other statues may yet lie buried there, vainly awaiting an enterprising generation! Around this hall are the remains of a similar gallery for viewing the sports of the athletes. How gorgeous this Pinacotheca must have appeared when decked with statues, pillars, paintings, and

stucco, the vaulted roof glorious in gold and colours! Now the damp wind sighs through the desolate halls, and the toads hop over the openings from which fallen statues have been excavated.

A whole party of young priests, having divested themselves of all unnecessary clerical costume, and tied pocket-handkerchiefs over their heads, were playing vigorously at ball in the sunshine; one or two, more studious, conned their books, seated on the great stones scattered around. A new-married couple wandered listlessly about—a pale, fair-haired Saxon girl, who saw nothing of the ruins that was not reflected in her husband's eyes, on whom she gazed unceasingly with long looks of love. He, alas! looked bored, and listened vacantly to the tiresome explanations of a *valet de place*—an animal highly objectionable everywhere, but specially so in a scene where "he that runs may read," the iron finger of Time having traced the history all too well.

There is every arrangement visible still for the warm or vapour baths, funnels for passing the heated water, and apertures for the evaporation of the steam. Altogether there are eight halls, and the extreme circuit is said to have been five miles and a half, including the adjoining circus, erected by the same wretched son of Severus who barbarously sacrificed his

brother, the unhappy Geta, to his ambition. His atrocious character is stamped on the many busts that yet remain of him, all remarkable for sinister deep-set eyes, and a diabolical grin, quite satyr-like. I must not forget to mention that one of the finest specimens of ancient mosaics was found in these baths, representing athletes, masques, and wrestlers, all hideously ugly and unpleasing, but admirably executed, and wonderfully preserved. This mosaic is now shown in one of the halls of the Lateran Palace, where, transported from its proper site, it loses all suggestive interest.

No ruins of ancient Rome have impressed me more than the solitary halls I have feebly endeavoured to describe, and I hope, as the spring advances, often to return and make out more distinctly the site of the two temples dedicated to Apollo and Esculapius, the *genii tutelares* of the place. But I shall look in vain for the great court, surrounded by porticoes that once adorned the inner edifice; and for the Odeon, whence music woke the echoes of the endless galleries and corridors; and for the shady groves of palm-trees waving over the gymnasium for running and wrestling in fine weather; and also for the great outer halls where poets declaimed and philosophers lectured. Nought remains but lonely vineyards extending on every side, where the patient mouse-coloured oxen of the Campagna turn over the fat,

heavy soil with a plough so antique in shape, it might serve as a pattern for Virgil to describe in his Georgics.

The very existence of theatres at Rome is ignored by the Pope and his tonsured ministers the cardinals, spite of the immense *manifesti* that meet their eyes at the corner of every street, and the glaring fact that at this particular moment certainly some half-a-dozen occupy the idleness of the Romans every evening. The truth is, that Rome is one of the most fastidious places in Italy about acting and music; nothing is tolerated but the very best, and executed in first-rate style. During the Carnival the Apollo is *the* opera-house, situated near the Ponte St. Angelo, almost under the shadow of St. Peter's, so that music, profane and sacred, respond to each other across the muddy Tiber. I wonder whether the thunders of the orchestra —which, spite of the official veto, *will* make itself heard —ever disturb the slumbers of the saintly Pius, and give him uncomfortable longings after worldly vanities.

A new opera appeared the other night, and I went because I had a box sent me. The theatre was crammed inside with company, and nearly surrounded outside by Papal dragoons, bearing drawn swords in their hands, and great white cloaks draping about them like togas, the heavy folds falling over their horses' flanks, and looking uncommonly ghostly

in the dark. Inside, the passages are guarded by more modernly-attired protectors, smelling furiously of tobacco. The theatres at Rome, spite of the goodly company they contain, are the dirtiest, blackest, most unsavoury places, I believe, in the whole world. Sometimes one's box is filled with such an overwhelming compound that it is indispensable to open the door, but as a soldier immediately comes and looks in suspiciously, and mounts a kind of guard over one, there is no help but to close it. The Apollo is no exception among its fellows, and is as dark and dirty as years of filth can make it. No wandering breath of fresh air ever strayed in there; it would have been frightened long before in the stairs and corridors, and either died, or got out again to moan over the wrongs done it among the richly-laden orange-trees and myrtles in the Pope's garden at the Vatican close by.

Up and up stairs we mounted until our box was reached and the door opened, which species of mysterious suspense and expectation preparatory to entering the penetralia of a theatre always makes my heart beat somewhat quicker. I looked round, and found a nobly-proportioned house, as large perhaps as Covent Garden. If it had only been clean, one might have admired it, but the walls and the ceiling were grimed with the

accumulated smoke of some fifty years at least, and the great central chandelier gave so little light that it was difficult to see anything before the footlights were raised. This Italian custom of darkening the theatres is carried generally quite to an excess, and gives a gloomy appearance to what ought to be a brilliant, enlivening scene. I never saw an opera-house properly lighted excepting La Scala, at Milan; the others avoid light as much as possible, unless on some grand occasion, when the *prima donna* or *tenore* takes a benefit, and then there is what is pompously styled *an illumination*—meaning a lighting up such as one always sees at the meanest theatre in London. But in this city, where four gay lamps burning before a shop-window attract a nightly crowd of some hundred persons, one may decidedly say "they know not the light"—a phrase here symbolical of much. The house was immensely full, the boxes looking like an overcrowded flower-vase, as the pink, and white, and blue draperies of the fair lapped over the edges like great leaves, and here a pretty hand protruded, and there a rounded shoulder. But honour to whom honour is due: no one here goes to the opera dressed in that state of classic nudity in favour at home, where, as Gavarni says, "Les Anglaises se décolletent jusqu'aux jarretières." The dragoons would decidedly be summoned in such case.

As for the opera, I have not the wildest surmise what it was about. The heroine was in a state of perpetual distress—therefore appropriately dressed in black—apparently suffering from her forlorn and orphan condition; a fact I gathered from her father, a very spare man, resigning her to the care of another lean individual—whose whole substance seemed to have melted away into a deep sepulchral bass voice—desiring him to take care of her after his execution. Such an antiquated and ponderous assignment raised a general titter in the pit, which (being the only place where modern Romans dare to express their opinion now that the Forum is given up to cows and the city to soldiers) is always loud, uproarious, and exceedingly independent. I will not waste more words on an opera which experienced a complete *fiasco*—the pit rose *en masse* at the conclusion, and irrevocably d——d it. The ballet was a regular burlesque, being no other than the sorrows of Mary Queen of Scots done into dancing. Oh! shade of Robertson, Froude, and other learned and grave historians, who have devoted such ponderous tomes to elucidate her history and defend her problematical virtue, what would have been your outraged feelings could you have seen your poetical heroine reduced to a squab, broad, red-faced woman, of surpassing ugliness, with staring, bead-like eyes, and a

great wart on the expanse of her forehead, gesticulating with furious and frantic vehemence, throwing abroad her arms and legs as if they did not belong to her trunk, but moved quite independently on springs? No mad woman escaped from Bedlam could have been more excited. Anywhere else than in Italy surprise would have possessed one at the sacrilegious prostitution of sweet Mary's name; but after seeing *The Prophet* at Florence perform capers and *entrechats*, and dance himself into the good graces of the three Anabaptists, I could wonder at nothing. I believe, if the creation of the world was considered a good *coup* for a ballet, an Italian would be found to arrange the *rôles* and the *pas seuls*, and an Italian would be found to applaud it, provided only the *mise en scène* was sufficiently voluptuous to tickle their fancy. Darnley, a dark, lugubrious man, discovers a fact about which historians are still in doubt, but with the peculiar perspicacity and penetration proper to the *dramatis personæ* of a ballet, he cuts the Gordian knot of ages, and decides as to the guilt of Mary with Bothwell—a lusty, stalwart knight in full armour, who does unutterable things with his sword, which he continually swings over his head, leaping about the while like nothing human but a Red Indian.

The Italian idea of Scotch costume is exceedingly

obscure, as I had already remarked in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. In the present instance the claim of the performers to be considered inhabitants of Old Gaul consisted in a variety of tight, coloured bandages, tied round their legs like garters. Mary is put in prison for her flirtation with Bothwell, who, together with his followers, penetrates there, and swears to liberate her, in order to accomplish which feat some of them descend into the bowels of the earth (trap 2, right-hand wing), and with many grimaces and contortions place a train of gunpowder all ready for explosion. Darnley appears, wearing an angry brow generally, and particularly towards the Queen, who really deserves all the abuse she gets, for her atrocious ugliness; he then enters the palace, and Mary conveniently faints, while Catherine Seaton, a skinny, middle-aged woman with scanty petticoats, executes a despairing fandango around her, until—hey!—presto—away!—up blows the palace, covering the stage with fragments, and the electric light rising out of the ruins makes the house look like broad day, quite putting the yellow candles to shame. Of what the electric light is typical—unless it be the supposed soul of Darnley—I cannot conceive; but who asks for congruity and consistency in a ballet? Not *Italians*, certainly; so the pit applauds, and the soldiers cry "Bravo!" and we all

go off in a very good humour out by the banks of the dark Tiber, still rushing to the sea through the dark night with the same rapid current, whether modern folly or pagan rites "rule the hour." *Lucrezia Borgia* was the opera selected a week or two later to rejoice the souls of sinful Christians as the Carnival fun "waxed fast and furious;" but, in order to mask the delinquencies of this sinful daughter of the Vatican, the tonsured wiseacres who govern the city of the Cæsars determined to drop all connection with so draggle-tail a dame, and so decided on christening her "Eliza Vosco." This surely was the very converse of Juliet's proposition as to there being nothing in a name.

V.

The Cupola of St. Peter's and Sistine Chapel—The Museum at the Lateran—San Pietro in Vincolo and the "Moses."

A GREAT deal has been said and written about the ascent of the cupola of St. Peter's in which I cannot agree; and as I went up yesterday, I conceive myself—minnow though I be—entitled to an opinion among the great tritons of the goose-tail. From the church we entered a door to the left, where sits a functionary to whom the ticket is delivered up; each holder of a ticket being responsible for the safety of the party of five which it admits. A broad staircase, *a cordoni* (meaning that there are no steps, but a steep inclined plane, to ascend), circles round and round; a horse or donkey, biped or quadruped, might go up with perfect ease, so gradual is the ascent. Many emperors, kings, and princesses have so far condescended to stretch their royal legs, as is set forth on the marble slabs that line the walls. We arrived on the roof, which is like the roof of any other great building, before we were conscious we had done anything. I saw no fountains or

workshops save a few sheds in corners, and I could quite realise that I was walking on a roof, and not in some debatable country, extending to a fabulous distance, midway between earth and heaven. I did not see anything astonishing except the size, for which one comes prepared by a knowledge of the vast proportions of St. Peter. One circumstance is wonderful, and I note the fact, that upwards of six or seven thousand a year is annually expended in keeping the exterior in repair. Standing there, I could not but contrast in my own mind the bald and bare aspect of the leaden plain before me, broken only by the vaulting arch of the central nave, and the huge dimensions of the statues over the façade—great clumsy giants of Bernini parentage—with the delicate tracery, the forest of airy pinnacles and spires, each different and all beautiful; the stars, the crosses, the bosses, pure in colour as when drawn from the marble bosoms of the Carrara mountains, the world of statues, the long vistas of overarching supports, light and bold as the recollection of a dream, seen on the roof of the wondrous cathedral at Milan—that stupendous yet graceful fabric, which in bridal whiteness challenges the snowy Alps whose crested summits, mingling with the clouds, close in the Lombard plains. There, as I contemplated the elegant confusion of the roof, at certain points perfectly sym-

metrical, at others absolutely labyrinthine in confusion, like the Fata Morgana turned topsy-turvy, I was not for an instant reminded of the solidity of the structure, but my eye dwelt alone on the incomparable decorations, the inimitable coquetry with which the solid walls are festooned, surmounted by the arrow-like spire dashing upwards into the heavens with a transparent lightness quite miraculous; the walls being divided and the staircase visible, as it were, in the air, twisting up cork-screw fashion between the apertures, looking altogether of a material more akin to the vapoury clouds than marble and stone. I must, therefore, again commit the delinquency of declaring that I prefer the exterior of Milan Cathedral as decidedly as I do the interior, with its deep, half-revealed Gothic aisles, to the gaudy trappings and glaring light of St. Peter's. But to return.

The great cupola of St. Peter's rises perpendicularly from the roof in a manner so sudden that ascent appears impossible; but entering a small door at the base, we addressed ourselves to the labour, proceeding crab-wise up flight after flight of stairs, one-sided and lurching, like a ship in a gale of wind, and making one feel about as giddy. These curiously-shaped ascents run between the exterior coating and the interior vaulting of the cupola, and are bent to follow its arching form. At

length we gained the gallery of the dome, and looked down from that immense elevation on the church beneath, and on the altar and tomb of the apostles. The four figures of the Evangelists—to my thinking incomparably the finest mosaics in the world—now appeared in their true gigantic proportions. We were the pigmies, and the people below, like dots, darkened the bright marble pavement; while the great letters in the inscription round the entablature grew taller than the tallest man that ever lived. Above was the superb arched roof of burnished gold, covered with mosaics; a glorious firmament, dotted with sparkling stars, and a radiance quite celestial, as the sun poured down through the central aperture, lighting up the angels, apostles, saints, and martyrs, who from above keep eternal watch and ward over the sacred tomb below, where burn by night and day the emblematic lamps. The celestial hierarchy around me, prefiguring the elders surrounding the great white throne, seemed planted there in expectation of the last trumpet.

Some more steep climbing up eccentric stairs, and the great outer balcony was reached, and the noble view stretched around. From this belvidere the Eternal City narrows to a space small as the palm of a man's hand, intersected by a thread of water flowing beside the tombs

and ruins and the busy haunts of men, towards the desolate Maremma, where a visible curse lies heavy on the land—a curse of sterility, and poverty, and sickness, where life becomes a living death.. Rome lies like a corpse at one's feet. The glory of the seven hills is humbled, and their undulations are scarcely perceptible at the foot of the vast basilica, pre-eminent in height and dignity. Twice mistress of the world, Rome can now only be deemed queen of the past. The murmurs of the multitude, confounded with the hum of the fountains, were borne aloft in the sighings of the scented breeze which fanned the orange-terraced gardens of the Vatican. How can vain words do justice to this noblest panorama of the land reverenced by all mankind as the centre from whence power, arts, religion, laws, history, beauty, bravery, civilisation have risen—the Cybele of Europe?

At this altitude the volcanic Alban mountains, veiled in deep forests, and the calcareous summits of the Sabine heights, looked but low hills, marking the limits of that vast upheaving plain, the Campagna, nowhere level, yet nowhere precipitous, bounded on one side by the Tyrrhenian Sea, on the other by more distant mountains, dry, naked, solitary, a lonely pine here and there crowning a rounded hill. I thought on all the theories extant accounting for the strange peculiarities of

the Roman Campagna; that it had been once an ocean, those heights its shore; Mount Soracte a rocky island, against whose sides the roaring billows beat; that Nature had formed it from the beginning for a great battle-field, whereon the destinies of mankind were to be fought out as long as time endured; that it had once contained countless volcanoes, whose united action formed the unnatural substratum of lava of which it consists. None of these fancies pleased me save the battle-field—that is the impress the heavy lines bear, as though the very hills had hardened after having gazed for untold centuries on blood and horrors, death and destruction, where powers, nations, and potentates have fallen, "the Goth, the Christian, time, war, flood, and fire"—the pale faces of the slain turned upwards, making death hideous. The islands on the sea towards Ostia were visible, like clouds of morning mist obscuring the empyrean blue—all, save heaven, was dead, brown, dried up, a very skeleton of Nature.

Some persons are possessed with a foolish ambition of climbing up into the ball, which will hold about five persons, in an atmosphere resembling the black-hole of Calcutta. I have a desire to be, rather than to seem, and never go anywhere for the mere sake of saying that I have been there, so I gazed at the scene

around me, and allowed others to laugh and joke at the mishaps that befell them. After our descent we strolled into the Sistine Chapel, rigidly guarded by a Cerberus looking out for francs. The interior is by no means large, yet there is a chastened elegance in its aspect quite peculiar—solemn, yet rich, and admirably blending in general effect. I never could endure the "Last Judgment;" it is to me a scene of unutterable Titanic confusion; no peace, no joy, no hope, but all terror, horror, dread, foreshortening, and anatomy. Indeed, it requires no little study to realise which are the sheep and which the goats, so generally uneasy do the entire mass of saints and sinners appear. A great work of art may be invaluable as a study to cognoscenti, and yet most unpleasing and unpalatable to the multitude. The sombre brown of the figures on the blue background reminded me of the grave-like colouring of all nature in the prospect I had just quitted. The attitude of the Saviour has every attribute of a Jupiter Tonans rejoicing in the chaos he again calls forth for the destruction of the creatures he had formed; and the graceful action of the Madonna, veiling herself at the sight of the sufferings she cannot avert, may *sound* poetical on paper, but is quite lost in the agonised mass around her. To me, the charm of the Sistine Chapel consists in the beautiful frescoes that adorn its walls, on

whose calm outlines the eye rests with complacency after the uneasy action of the "Last Judgment." Beautiful is Perugino's delineation of our Lord's temptation; the three movements combined into one picture with the quaint arrangement common to the early schools. Beautiful, also, perhaps finest of all his works, is "Christ delivering the Keys to Peter," the general arrangement and grouping of which served as the precise model to Raphael in his lovely picture of the "Spozalizio," now in the Brera at Milan. Here, too, Ghirlandaio, Roselli, Botticelli, and Signorelli, the great fathers of the Florentine school, have striven in noble emulation, and united to produce a result not only artistically of the highest excellence, but delightful and admirable in the eyes of all who crowd hither from every quarter of the civilised globe.

The folly of endeavouring to form separate galleries of sculpture in the same city as the Vatican Museum is apparent. Even Rome, were all her subterranean treasures revealed, could never hope to form another such temple to sculpture. The overcrowded rooms of the Capitol Museum present an aspect of confusion proper only to a lumber loft, while the bare walls of the spacious halls at the Lateran are in the other extreme, and appear so nude and unfurnished, it is quite

desolating to look on them. Why should not the gems of both collections be placed in that boundless Vatican, whose countless galleries and corridors might yet receive thousands of fresh statues, and still have room, and to spare? On the whole, I was more pleased with the Lateran collection than with that of the Capitol, where, excepting the "Dying Gladiator"—if gladiator we are to call him, with that cord and horn—and the "Flora and Faun," I never could see much to admire. At the Lateran I was enchanted with the Braschi "Antinous"—a colossal statue of miraculous beauty, second only to the "Apollo Belvidere"—if, indeed, second to that. Antinous appears in the character of Osiris, crowned with ivy berries and leaves, a lotus-flower placed in the centre of the garland—a rich, varied, and classical head-gear of the utmost beauty. The hall appropriated to the family of Augustus is wonderfully grand and interesting. Ranged around the walls stand the solemn statues of the imperial house in calm majestic attitudes, monumental in character. The statue of Livia has a lovely face, and stands in an attitude full of grace and dignity, with one hand upraised; the flowing robes and stately presence breathing a very atmosphere of imperial majesty tempered by womanly sweetness. Augustus and Drusus wear the eternal togas—those classical bedgowns I so detest.

Tiberius appears crowned with oak and acorns, a face full of youthful beauty and god-like repose, passionless as the calm surface of the summer heavens. Who could imagine such vices lay dormant under so winning an exterior? Agrippina bears her proud character and great beauty stamped on her lofty brow. Her attitude is less pleasing than that of Livia, masculine determination preponderating over more feminine charms. Two statues of Germanicus, habited in full armour, express an amiable, gentle character, appealing to our sympathies by its unassuming yet manly expression of perfect goodness. His head is unadorned, and both statues are of high value, from the admirable likeness and perfect state of preservation in which they have come down to us.

Very interesting is the rough Dacian heart, mentioned by Murray, with the sculptor's points still visible. But most of all was I struck by an admirable basso-relievo on a marble tomb of Orestes pursued by the Furies—wildly horrible in their hideous aspect—his murder of Clytemnestra and her lover in the centre —and, in the other corner, the shade of Agamemnon, an old man, wrapped in a deep, mysterious cloak, with a hood over his face, inciting Orestes to revenge. This is one of the very finest basso-relievos in Rome. Opposite is an inferior work, the destruction of

Niobe's children, on another tomb. Near by are two splendid marble pillars of Pavonazzetto, taken from the bed of the Tiber, whose beauty suggests the question, What must Rome have been, avenued with such colonnades?

One of the finest statues here is that of Sophocles, bearing the name of the Antonelli family inscribed on the pedestal. It was discovered by a curious accident. A poor man, working in his vineyard, near the campagna of Conte Antonelli, brother of the cardinal, came upon a block of stone that resisted all his blows. He dug and dug until he discovered a statue, which he threw upon *terra firma*. Off he goes to his patrone, the conte, to relate to him the occurrence. But, says he, "cosa importa a me? I have neither a cart to carry it, nor horses nor oxen to drag the cart; via! there it must lie. Perhaps, however, sua excellenza the conte would give him something for it?" The conte returned his query like a Quaker, by asking another—"What did he want for the thing?" At last, after a great deal of *discorrera*, fifteen scudi were agreed on (three pounds), and the contadino went away gloriously contented. The statue was dragged to the *cortile* of the count's casino, and lay forgotten in a corner until Gregory, the late pope, during one of his provincial progresses, passed by Terracina and break-

fasted with Count Antonelli. Passing through the *cortile*, the saintly eyes turned on the recumbent statue. "Ma che cosa abbiamo qui? What is this? Qualche cosa di bello mi pare." So the statue was raised and examined, and pronounced entirely excellent. The count begged to present the fifteen scudi worth to his Holiness, who gladly accepted the offer, and ordered the statue to be packed off to Rome, where it was cleaned and repaired by benevolent antiquarians, who, acting as sponsors, named it Sophocles, under which title it now appears, the principal attraction of the third best gallery in Rome—and all for fifteen scudi! The thing *now* is priceless. The interior court of the Lateran Palace is surrounded above and below with an arched colonnade, richly painted in fresco, which produces a very noble effect. Indeed, the whole building is grand and palatial in the extreme, forming as it does a kind of wing or addenda to the most chastely elegant and classically imposing church in Rome, far more perfect externally than St. Peter's, however inferior to the great leviathan in size. I ascended the stairs, and found the upper suite of apartments of fine proportions, and decorated with much splendour, but desolate, damp, and forlorn. They are now the cradle of an infant picture-gallery, but as yet in a hopelessly infantine state. I remarked one picture

by Caravaggio, that Molière of painting, "The Tribute Money," as fine as anything I remember of his works. There, too, is a sweet "Annunciation," by the Cavaliere Arpino, where Mary is represented as the simple gentle maiden one loves to picture her, not the made-up simpering beauty to which she is too often degraded by even the first masters. The youthfulness and freshness here are most engaging, and quite charmed my eyes, accustomed to the glare and grandeur of Parmegiano and Domenichino, who never dream but of the Queen of Heaven. The picture by Sir Thomas Lawrence of George IV. is a tremendous affair. I never saw an individual so overladen with orders, chains, ribbon, and velvet, even at the Carnival. Indeed, he would make a capital *figurante* for that season. Certainly the air of Rome, and the sternly classical halls of the Lateran, are by no means advantageous "to the first gentleman in Europe." Poor man! how the mighty are fallen!

During Lent there are what are called *stazioni* for prayers at all the old out-of-the-way churches; and if they possess miraculous treasures, they are displayed for adoration on these occasions. I have been to-day to San Pietro in Vincolo, where the *stazione* was held, and the church open all day. The road to this church is the identical *Via Scelerata*, so named because here

the wicked Tullia, daughter of King Servius, drove over the body of her aged father, murdered by Lucius, her husband, son of the banished Tarquinius. Servius was slain on this very road, situated on the Esquiline, which, when Tullia heard, she mounted her chariot and drove to the Forum, where, unabashed and untouched by her father's bloody death, she hailed her husband king! As she returned home the body of her father lay in the way. The driver of her chariot (says Arnold) stopped short, and showed Tullia where her father lay in his blood, but she *bade him drive on.* The chariot rolled over the body, and she went to her home with her father's blood on the wheels of her chariot.

Flocks of pedestrians and numbers of carriages made the dust fly in perfect clouds about the solitary lanes and walled-in alleys in the vicinity. All the neighbourhood was up and alive. Droves of beggars sit or stand grouped on the steps, and clink their boxes and ask for alms for the sake of the Madonna, and for the love of heaven, with an energy reminding one of their brigand associates, whose prayer becomes a command, and the command death if not promptly obeyed. Some soldiers were keeping watch and ward outside the building. Priests, nuns, fine ladies, contadine, perfumed beaux, and liveried servants, cardinals and monsignori, were streaming in and out of the doors;

some kneeling at the altar, others prostrate before a favourite saint, ornamented for the occasion with new artificial flowers. The fine proportions of the elegant church told well as a background to the moving, animated scene, the graceful marble pillars (pilfered from some ancient temple) springing airily to the roof. On the grand altar were displayed the chains which, tradition says, bound St. Peter in prison; hence the name of the church "in Vincolo." They lay exposed to the veneration of all true Catholics in a small box lined with crimson silk. Wrapped in deep meditation and prayer, numbers knelt on the steps, and so would I have knelt also, if I could have believed the tale, but alas!—"Mi manca la fede!" I thought the chains looked particularly modern, and very weak and feeble in the links—*fancy* sort of chains, and not at all the kind of articles wherewith to bind a man who had a mind to break them. I gazed with the crowd, but did *not* believe.

Flowers (of cambric) ornamented the altar all about, while the grand old "Moses" frowned down from the corner where he is so barbarously wedged in, with a look of supreme contempt at the scene around. The more I look at that statue, the more I dislike it, profane as it is not to rave about the so-called "capo d'opera" of Michel Angelo "the divine." Nothing

can be more ill placed than the statue, on a low seat nearly on a level with the spectator, the gigantic form squeezed between two columns, on a monument which all the while is *not* a monument. Certainly this image does not impress one with a high idea of Moses. The grossly sensual expression tells of passions proper rather to a satyr than a lawgiver, and the long, ropy hair falling from the head and beard painfully remind one of a shaggy goat—faults which are unrelieved by any nobler indications save an air of arrogant command. The drapery, too, is ill folded, heavy, and bad. Should a great lawgiver who speaks with the Almighty appear in such a guise, with such a look? No, truly. Still, amid all its defects, this is a remarkable work of art—specially remarkable for a peculiar savage air of grandeur all its own, and not to be described. It has also great power, consisting in the *anima* which makes the cold marble *palpitate* with vivid expression. The action, too, of the figure is natural, the forms bold without being overcharged, like many of Michel Angelo's works. The modelling of the arms is particularly fine. But how wanting is the statue in all wherein the Greeks so excelled—the sedate, noble simplicity, the profound, contemplative look, communing as it were with eternity, which almost excuse the worship paid by an ignorant people to these sculptured

gods. Above the "Moses" lies a recumbent statue of Julius II., so placed as to appear precisely like a sphinx. For this atrocity Michel Angelo is not responsible.

Over an altar there is a lovely St. Margaret, by Guercino, rebuking a monster ready to devour her. It positively riveted me. One may here admire his admirable colouring, compounded of the Roman, Venetian, and Bolognese schools, with that bold opposition of light and shade in which he so delighted. Who ever had a finer appreciation of female beauty than Guercino, of that glowing, warm, gorgeous type perfected under a southern sun, flourishing along with the luscious grapes and the pomegranates, and often brown and sunburnt as they? St. Margaret is in white, with a purple drapery; her long hair falls dishevelled over her shoulders; and the almost saucy air, girlish yet commanding, with which she menaces the creature (whose great jaws, well furnished with teeth, are opened to devour her) is uncommonly charming. I feel I never shall forget that picture of "Valiant Margaret," as Wordsworth calls her.

In the sacristy hangs Guido's "Hope," a sweet pathetic head, fit to match with the Cenci. There is a picture, too, by Domenichino of "Paul's Deliverance in Prison"—*maniéré*, hard, and ill coloured: the angel

looks most *positive* and earthly in his stiff curls. Certainly this "celestial visitant" brought with him "no airs from Paradise." I have no notion of admiring a picture because it is celebrated and praised by Murray.

VI.

Baths of Titus at the Coliseum, at San Martino di Monti, and at the Sette Sale—Cardinal Antonelli.

CLOSE by the Coliseum are the Baths of Titus, on the side of a vineyard-covered hill. On driving up, they present very much the appearance of a gigantic rabbit-warren enclosed by brickwork burrowing into the hillside in oblong holes, shaped something like the vomitoria in the Coliseum. I was astonished at the contrast they presented to the grand, awful-looking masses of the Baths of Caracalla, which rise like the ruins of some mediæval castle fabulous in extent, with turrets, walls, and bastions cresting the sky. The glories of the Baths of Titus are, on the contrary, deep buried underground, and one must descend down and down deep stairs, and through long subterranean passages, before their wonders are revealed. Here, where the light of the bright sun never falls, and day and night are alike gloomy and mysterious, halls of interminable extent, opening into long suites of chambers, corridors, and temples, penetrate the earth in a state of perfect preserva-

tion. The imposing grandeur of this underground palace cannot be described; it impresses the mind with solemn funereal thoughts and speculations on other centuries and nations, when the world was as unlike that place we inhabit as would the moon appear to us were we transported thither.

These ruins have, so to say, a triple antiquity, being supposed first to have formed part of the villa of Mæcenas; then to have been appropriated to the golden house of Nero, whose memory was so execrated that his burnished palace, of surpassing size and magnificence, was degraded by being made the foundation of the public baths erected by Titus, and its chambers filled up the more securely to consolidate the superstructure, which can alone account for the firm and compact manner in which those portions still unexcavated are completely packed with stone and rubbish, although the roofs and walls are still entire. Standing in the central hall, the long vista opening on either hand is a sight not to be forgotten. It wants but the garden and the trees, bearing the bright many-coloured fruit, to carry one away to Aladdin and the Arabian Nights. On one side were the rooms intended for winter use, then looking full on the sun, which has never penetrated here for so many centuries; the other façade, for summer habitation, faced a garden, now buried deep

down in the soil, and only to be surmised from the situation of a great hall, with an arched opening, in whose centre still remain the ruins of a fountain, where the water welled up from an enormous marble basin, now the wonder and glory of the great vaulted hall in the Vatican. Along the margin where it stood still appear stone troughs for enclosing earth, where flowers—their blossoms reflected in the water—gave the finishing touch to what must have been a scene of more than Epicurean luxury.

There are other places where portions of the Baths of Titus are visible, as, for instance, in the church of San Martino di Monti, which is, however, disputed, for some look on these remains as portions of the Baths of Trajan and the Sette Sale, a general reservoir common to the Baths and Coliseum.

Up a particularly filthy and narrow lane, breaking off from that glorious highway leading in a straight line from Santa Maria Maggiore, crowning the Esquiline with its snowy domes and colonnades, to the old Lateran Basilica, proudly spreading its immense, though elegantly light, façade on the summit of the Cœlian Hill, is situated one of the grandest and most interesting martyr-churches of Rome—San Martino di Monti. No mere casual observer would ever discover the church, hemmed in as it is in a narrow alley bor-

dered by great blank walls, standing in a tumble-down *cortile* where a soldier keeps guard, part of the monastery being occupied as a barrack. On entering the spacious and admirably-proportioned edifice, the eye is perfectly overcome with the gorgeous *ensemble* of painting, gilding, marble, mosaics, fluted columns, all surmounted by a ceiling so magnificent in purple, gold, and crimson, the colours finely mellowed by age, that it requires some moments actually to realise its splendour. The central nave is large and grand, the columns supporting the aisles of ancient, and therefore classical, workmanship; the altar, raised on double flights of coloured marble steps, is resplendent with magnificent decoration; the tribune above glows in gilding and rich frescoes; side chapels of great beauty open out beneath the arches of the aisles, decorated with statuary and painting.

I can give no details, for my memory seems oppressed and stupefied by the grandeur of this superb *ecclesiastical drawing-room*, such being the only appropriate term I can apply to it. I do remember one curious painting of St. Elijah, as the Catholics call him, who, in company with the Wandering Jew, is, according to tradition, supposed to be still walking the world until the end of all things. He, as if wearied by his endless pilgrimage, reposes on a rock, while an

angel beckons to him, pointing to the sea stretching away before them, as if animating him to proceed on his wanderings.

The aisles are filled with paintings, alternating with the interesting frescoes of Poussin—poor and washy, however, in execution, I confess, to my eyes, and much injured by damp, as are his water-colour paintings in the Colonna Palace, though, as far as the drawing goes, full of fancy, and rich in Italian character.

There is a large fresco of a council held under Silvester, who was Pope when Constantine established Christianity as the religion of the Roman empire, enforcing the acts of the General Council of Nice in the condemnation of Arius, Sabellius, &c., burning their heretical works in the presence of the emperor, who is represented sitting lower than the pontiff, a little apart from the bishops, who are ranged in circular seats around. I descended down marble stairs to the first subterranean church, situated immediately under the altar, which, being visible from the nave, gives great lightness to the tribune, as row after row of coloured marble balustrades meet and intersect each other, ascending and descending very gracefully.

The second church, or crypt, is circular, the arched roof supported by clustered columns of much beauty.

Here lie the bones, not only of Silvester, but of four martyred popes, besides those of many other early confessors to the faith, who sealed their life by a glorious death. Around in this narrow space is collected all that remains of many of that blessed army of martyrs whose spirits, it is surely only just to suppose, hover over and guard with peculiar care and love the imperial city where they lived, and believed, and suffered in the flesh—Ciriacus, and Priscilla, and Anastasia, and Sergius, and Fabian, and many another name more honoured in the courts of heaven than remembered on forgetful and careless earth.

The monk acting as my guide, whom I instantly discovered to be Lucchese from his accent, made his reverence before their remains, and then opened a door at one side, where, through a narrow arched stair, we descended into a dimly-lighted cavernous vault below. Having early been consecrated as a church, and serving as a place of concealment to Silvester in the stormy days of persecution prior to the accession of Constantine, these vaults have been wonderfully preserved—no Roman remains in Rome are more perfect or more striking. Green damp covers the gigantic piers supporting the boldly-arched roof, while here and there great entrances, now built up, lead into other long-drawn aisles—we know not how far beyond

—communicating with the interminable network of catacombs surrounding subterraneous Rome.

We walked upon a black and white mosaic pavement, similar to that I have noticed at the Baths of Caracalla. Not a sound, not a sight, but was in harmony with this dark region of the tomb.

"Faint from the entrance came a daylight ray,"

gleaming down the passage by which we had entered into the solemn crypt, heavy with the dews of long ages, and rich in the association of both pagan and Christian Rome. No modern hand has desecrated it—Bernini (thank Heaven!) having left untouched this earliest sanctuary out of the catacombs. A place more awful and solemnising cannot be conceived, and as I wandered among the huge arches and beheld deep vistas of solemn gloom, I felt penetrated with indescribable reverence in the presence of these consecrated remains that even ruthless Time has spared.

What are the Roman or his works to me? It is the religious associations clinging to these old walls that entrance me; the recollections of the early martyrs, their faith, their love, their sufferings, the fearless zeal which drove them to raise altars to the Catholic Jehovah on the very walls where pagan deities had ruled. The black-robed monk was in perfect keeping with the scene, moving silently about, the red cross

embroidered on his dress, a symbolic beacon amid the gloom :—

> "Shades were its boundary, for my strained eye sought
> For other limit to its width in vain."

The monk showed me the coffin of Beato Tommaso, suspended midway from the blackened walls. Cardinals' hats, all ruined by damp and age, hung from the arched roof; monuments were under our feet, tombs around; bones and skulls heaped confusedly in corners. There was a chapel at one dark extremity where Pope Silvester had prayed and invoked the Virgin that still hung there, believing that she had turned and looked at him. What wonders might one not believe deep down buried in the earth? There was his chair wherein he sat when in this time-honoured hall the great council was held, the same as represented in the glorious church above. Once the baths were on a level with the city; now they are buried in its foundations; but the memory of those times lives, and breathes, and breaks forth from these subterranean depths in the hearts of those who come and go, carrying recollections and impressions that will not away.

Pagan Rome is gone, and Christian Rome is but a name; but those solemn walls stand firm, majestic, and imperial even in decay; and those altars, where rest the martyred saints, are entire in the

consecrated gloom which the sun has not penetrated these eighteen centuries.

Close by the church there is a well-walled vineyard, bearing the inscription outside, in small chalked letters, "Sette Sale." A stranger might pass hundreds of times up that lonely lane hemmed in with walls, and not remark it; yet there are treasures of ruins within that wooden door, which opened to us after long knocking.

A highly-cultivated garden appeared, with a broad path winding through the trellised vines, which I followed. The good-humoured contadine stood up as I passed, and, smiling, wished me "Una buona passeggiata."

In one corner of the pretty vineyard, positively bristling with ruins, is a hillock formed of crumbling walls, overgrown with grass, and myrtle, and dwarf ilex bushes, with here and there a long straggling vine, in whose side seven arched openings, hoary with decay, open into seven enormous vaults—great cavernous recesses, all black and dismal—used, as it is supposed, for reservoirs of water to supply the Coliseum and the Baths of Titus, which lie farther on, near the fall of the hill. The cabbages and lettuces grow up to the very brink of these awful pits, and all nature wears a smiling, domestic character, utterly

unsympathetic with, and sternly repulsed by, the frowning ruins, which scorn such impertinent approximation.

Wandering down a little farther, I came to an enormous portico, forming one of the angles of the baths, where the philosophers used to expound their Grecian wisdom in the ears of the degenerate Romans. Perhaps under that very arch, the siege of Jerusalem, the obstinacy and destruction of the Jews, and the magnanimity of Titus were discussed and commented on as the latest "news from the East." How are the mighty fallen! Rome lives but in a few unintelligible ruins—a fragment and a confusion! Titus, his arch with its triumphs, and his gigantic baths, are mouldering in decay. The Jews are wandering homeless over God's wide earth; and here a few olive-trees bask in the warm sunshine under the vaulted roof, once radiant in marble and gold, where congregated the learned few whose togas swept the rich mosaic floors. The pillared colonnades, the shady groves, the magnificent shrines, have vanished; the sumptuous pile is no more; and Nero's golden house, accursed for his sake, and exiled from the surface of the earth, alone preserves its subterranean walls, buried deep down in the bosom of mother-earth—that parent whose cold embrace cherishes so carefully all intrusted to her keeping.

I made the acquaintance to-day of a very remarkable man, on whose shoulders at present rests the entire responsibility of the Papal Government—Cardinal Antonelli, secretary of state to Pius IX., and minister also of finance, of police, of justice, of everything—*multum in parvo*, in fact; for he has appointed such mere lay figures to these various offices that he alone bears the onus and the weight of the entire machine of state.

There are complaints, not loud but deep, of a system by which, it is said, the internal government suffers immensely from this personal concentration of power; for the cardinal prefers diplomacy to Blue Books and financial details, and neglects, it is said, the one to apply himself the more undividedly to the other. Deficits are spoken of in the revenue—whether proceeding from scarcity and scanty harvests, or malgovernment, I cannot say; and there are grumblings and great discontent, as it is known that the dear, good, pacific Pope, since he was driven from his throne because he would not head a republic, leaves the management of everything to his favourite minister.

Antonelli was instrumental in his Holiness's escape to Gaeta, and very nearly himself got murdered in those stormy days when Rome was given up to Red

Republicans. But now he is installed in the Vatican, and appears neither to dread nor to remember the fate of poor Rossi, the best and most upright man in Italy, who fell assassinated by a furious populace on the stairs of the Palazzo della Cancelleria, because his course of reform was not rapid enough to satisfy their insane cravings for licentious liberty. Without question, his successor, Antonelli, is a very remarkable person, and gifted with superior talents for government. *Reste à savoir* if one man *can* do everything—a state problem the solving of which has cost the Roman States another revolution.

In the meantime, the good Pope is given up to prayer and religious observances, and Antonelli alone guides the helm of state amid the angry breakers and sunken rocks of the stormy sea that beats furiously against the aged and rotten timbers of the fisherman's *navicella*, weakened, crazy, and disjointed by the tempests of accumulated centuries.

On the occasion of our visit to the cardinal, on whom fortune smiles, we entered the labyrinth of courts forming that part of the Vatican in which the Pope resides by a private entrance, after making the circuit of St. Peter's, whose colossal proportions can only be rightly estimated by such a *giro*, or by mounting the cupola. Our carriage dashed through entrance

after entrance into a succession of courts, all guarded by mounted sentinels, until reaching the spacious and beautiful *cortile* decorated by Raphael, where we dismounted. An interminable staircase of perhaps one hundred steps next appeared. Up and up we climbed, encountering Swiss guards at due intervals. At last, having gained the fourth story—quite the *piano-nobile* at Rome—came the ante-room, with its allowance of cringing menials, who, as we were honoured guests, bowed us at once into a handsome apartment furnished like a dining-room.

As the cardinal was engaged at the moment, we were here entertained by an old French monsignore, canon of St. Peter's, a rabid Légitimiste, as he informed us; at all events, not so overburdened by brains as to make him an acquisition to any party. I can only say he seemed worthy of the petticoat he wore.

My Italian companion, the Contessa San G——, is a perfect worshipper of the Emperor Louis Napoleon, and of the Bonapartes collectively and generally. This she was too cunning and acute to declare openly, but drove the poor old monsignore skilfully into a corner, forcing him to acknowledge how much the Emperor Napoleon had done for France.

"Mais oui, mais oui; la Providence a agi, il faut

l'avouer," replied he. "Enfin, la Providence se sert de tous les moyens," in a whining tone.

"Was not Marshal MacMahon a great general?"

"Mais oui; un homme de talent, cependant mondain."

"Ah!" said my friend, "France is prosperous; cela suffit; ses beaux jours sont revenus;" at which undeniable fact the canon looked glum, although the pink of old-fashioned French *politesse.**

Feeling himself worsted, he broke out into an enumeration of all the old English families to whom he was allied for my edification. From this he passed to a tremendous eulogy of the cardinal.

"Mais il fait tout, ce cher cardinal; il a des talents universels; il pense à la finance, à la diplomatie, au gouvernement intérieur; enfin c'est un homme miraculeux, et si bon, si aimable!"

As this "universal" character is the very thing for which Cardinal Antonelli is reproached by his enemies, who stigmatise his ministry precisely because he insists on doing everything, I could scarcely suppress a smile at the ill-timed enthusiasm of the canon.

"Ce cher homme," continued he, "vous savez qu'il a manqué d'être tué lorsque le saint Père s'est enfui:

* This was written before the war.

comment aurait-il jamais échappé? Ah! il faut adorer la Providence!" saying which, he folded his hands, and assumed an unctuous look of devotion.

I was growing weary of this old man, with his "providential" tirades, when the major-domo entered, and announced that the cardinal would receive us.

We passed through a suite of rooms to the writing apartment of his Eminence, where were tables overlaid with letters and papers, all arranged with the nicest order. Here stood the cardinal, a tall, handsome man, of a grave and majestic presence, which at once, without any effort on his part, inspires respect. He was dressed in a purple robe, or *sottana*, edged and trimmed with red, a red skull-cap on his head, stockings to match of red silk, with the nattiest shoes on the neatest feet, set off by gold buckles.

I cannot positively assert that Antonelli is handsome, but he has a fine Roman face, almost Zingaro in character, with brilliant black eyes, and that rich sunburnt complexion common to Italians. The expression of his countenance is excellent; and the suavity and kindness of his manner in receiving a party of ladies (who must have been a great nuisance to him) admirable.

My companion the countess was intimately acquainted with him and his family; nevertheless, her reverence

for a cardinal prince operated on her so strongly, that she cast herself on her knees before him and kissed the hem of his robe—a proceeding he vigorously opposed, but without succeeding. My genuflexions were also profound, but of a more moderate character, as became a *protester*, or Protestant, within the precincts of the Vatican.

The cardinal led us into a charming boudoir, or drawing-room beyond, exquisitely furnished: sofas and chairs of the richest Berlin work; carpets into which one's feet sank, as it were, to rise no more; walls covered with valuable paintings in glowing frames; and crystal cabinets enshrining priceless collections of those articles named "of bigotry and virtue." The windows looked out over the great Piazza of St. Peter's, and formed part of the façade that faces high up over the colonnades to the right. Sure never were fairer apartments wherein a favoured cardinal kept his state; not even Wolsey at Hampton Court in all his glory was better or more nobly lodged.

We two ladies were seated on the sofa, while the cardinal placed himself opposite, and it was then I fell to admiring the extreme beauty of his foot and the almost feminine whiteness and delicacy of his hands, where on one finger sparkled a superb emerald. A

conversation now began with the contessa, who rattled away in a lively, sparkling way on a variety of subjects. She spoke of her desire to make converts to the Catholic faith. Antonelli received her remarks with a silent smile.

"I," said he, after a pause, "being a Catholic and a cardinal, naturally would desire to see all the world even as myself—*come son io stesso*—but such a change should arise from deep conviction and mature reflection in order to be acceptable to God. I little admire the violent efforts of those who think that by promiscuously making converts they perform a good and acceptable work. For worldly motives to operate in such a question is obviously most improper, and I much fear many sudden conversions of inconsiderate persons arise from that cause."

These were noble sentiments, and came with double force from Rome and the Vatican in the nineteenth century. After this little rebuff to the good-natured but over-zealous countess, who so eagerly desires to see the whole world within the embrace of the "one true Church," the conversation turned on England. Of that country the cardinal professes himself a great admirer. And the extraordinary memory which he possesses! All he reads he remembers, even to the most minute descriptions of public buildings, streets, &c. He told

us that he had astonished the Duchess of S—— by describing to her exactly the exterior of her London mansion. . .

"Why, you never told me you had been in London," exclaimed she.

"I never have been there," replied the cardinal; "but I read some years ago a description of the great London houses, and I remember some of the distinctive features of your Grace's mansion. And," continued he, "I have surprised Germans and French too with my accurate descriptions of certain marked features in their capitals."

He inquired particularly about myself, taking really a lively interest in much I told him.

"Come to me," said he, "if I can serve you. It would give me pleasure to be useful to you."

Twenty requests were on my lips in a moment, especially an introduction to a certain ambassadress; but I reflected that the offers of princes were sufficiently complimentary and gracious in themselves, and, like relics, should be hung up to be venerated and admired, but not to be used. However, I must observe, *par parenthèse*, respecting Cardinal Antonelli, that I knew an English lady really in distress to whom his kindness and protection, when invoked, were quite Samaritan.

We chatted on in the most agreeable way for more

than half an hour, and, although prepared to move, the cardinal did not allow conversation to flag for an instant. He made the contessa quite happy by promising her the consecrated candle which he was to bear at the approaching feast of the Purification, one of the grandest in the Roman calendar; and charmed me by the paternal kindness with which he addressed her as daughter, calling her *mia figlia*, with the most graceful tact possible, assuming thus his own position while he indicated hers.

At last we rose to depart, when the contessa, spite of all opposition, would perform the same genuflexions, although he exclaimed—"*Ma—le prego—Davvero mi duole—Come mai*," &c. He shook hands with me, and actually conducted us to the outer door of his private rooms—an attention duly observed by the *servitù* in waiting, who received us with all manner of homage in consequence. So we retreated, quite *comblées d'honneurs*, and descended to our carriage in the best possible humour with ourselves and all the great universal world.

VII.

A Roman Jumble, or Sketch of a Day.

ONE of these fine, bright, sunshiny days is so mixed and varied by all sorts of sights, that it is like a mimic life. The four-and-twenty hours extend and dilate into a well-filled existence, and I find myself taking in so many and varied ideas, and passing through such shifting scenes, that, unless I came home and put it all down, I could never believe one day would afford so kaleidoscopic a variety. It is only at Rome one can spend such days, where the present and the past meet, clash, or harmonise, as the case may be; where one may rush from the catacombs to the marionnettes, or from an appointment with the Holy Father to the hurdle-race ridden by real English jockeys. New phases of life open out with the passing hour, each by turns engrossing, enticing, intoxicating to various minds. Every chord of intellectual sympathy is touched, and the spirit grows well-nigh paralysed under the overwhelming sense of its utter inability to grasp even a portion of the mighty whole that unfolds

in all its excellence before it. The sculptor—the painter—the antiquarian—the lover of antique art—the philosopher—the interpreter of Christian antiquity—the profound theologian—the admirer of Nature in her wildest and most unadorned beauty—the epicurean, who delights in sumptuous palaces, marble halls, and pillared terraces, stretching into orange groves luxuriant in tropical profusion—the sportsman who revels in his exhilarating flight across the free Campagna—the fine lady, who lives only for routs and balls and incessant dissipation—the nonchalant *élégant*, her husband, who reads the *Times* and lives at "the club" all day—the solitary pilgrim, journeying from distant lands to fall prostrate before Christ's vicegerent upon earth—the soldier who loves reviews and the "pomp and circumstance" of war—the lawyer, who buries himself in musty libraries—the architect, come from the far North to study classic porticoes, colonnades, and piazzas of Palladian palaces built for the bright summer, glorious as its sun, where other Romeos may love, and still fairer Juliets be wooed, under the shadow of deep cypresses, in azure nights when reigns a softer day—the musical dilettante, who finds here the best opera in harmonious Italy—last of all, the idle rich vagabond, without end or aim in his senseless life, simply seeking for amusement,—

Rome, in her boundless multiplication of varied resources, will satisfy and fascinate.

O rare old city! I embrace thee, and I love thee as the intellectual home of all mankind; still, as in the darkened centuries of the middle ages, the great parent of knowledge and of art. But this is an endless theme; so let me, without further preface, describe, as I proposed, my day as it passed, and then judge, good reader, how charmingly time goes in the Eternal City.

In the morning I strolled into the Borghese Gallery, always invitingly open—that superb palace which flings back as it were disdainfully the meaner houses pressing upon its long façades, stretching away down entire streets. Little Pauline Bonaparte must have felt rather proud when, on entering the grand central *cortile*, with its open galleries and graceful colonnades, she was hailed as its mistress.

The apartments devoted to the picture-gallery are on the ground-floor, and of almost interminable extent, ending in a corridor decorated with a sparkling fountain, and commanding a lovely view of St. Peter's, rising like a radiant queen out of the green meadow encircling the Vatican on that side, and extending to the water-side. Close under the windows rolls the turbid Tiber, widened here into the Porta di Ripetta,

with divers squat, miniature steamers riding on its muddy current, which take passengers and cattle (the latter decidedly predominating) up the river as far as possible into the dreary Campagna.

I had already visited the Borghese Gallery many times, but it is a place not only to see, but to live in, among those grandest pictures time has spared. I of course saluted the divine Sibyl—the presiding deity of the whole collection, singularly bright and glowing for the usually sombre pencil of Domenichino. I cannot but look, however, on that picture as intended for a St. Cecilia rather than the pagan prophetess. Then there is her magnificent rival, Circe, by that wonderful colourist the Ferrarese Dosso Dossi, who has here called forth the most gorgeous *ensemble* of beauty the eye ever rested on. There is a strange magic calm in the aspect of the enchanted wood within whose shadow she rests, dressed in a rich Eastern costume, drawing around her circles of magic incantations, which she calmly watches, as though certain of success.

Of what a different class are the Sacred Families by Andrea del Sarto !—monotonous in expression, and grouping always the same face of his somewhat Dutch-featured wife, with nearly the same head-dress, but soft and harmonious in colouring, as though his brush had been dipped in morning dew : *ruggiadoso*, as the

Italians have it—a word dropping as it were with glittering dewdrops.

But most of all do I revel in three or four pictures in the Venetian rooms; specially those grandly beautiful Graces, by Titian, bearing the bow and quiver of Cupid, whose eyes Venus (a type of perfect loveliness) is binding.

Where did Titian procure such models? or *did* he ever procure such models? Rather are they not visions of his glowing imagination called forth from the vasty depths of his own Venetian skies, as he floated in his gondola under the fragrant shade of the green islets that encircled his native Venice?

Then comes "Sacred and Profane Love," seated contemplating each other on opposite sides of a well, with Cupid between them playing with the water: the one calm, reserved, reflective, clothed in white robes of the Venetian style, wearing flowers in her auburn hair; the other vain and careless, with a certain *abandon* in her attitude, revealing her terrestrial propensities—the ever-lighted lamp of pleasure burning in her upraised hand, as she turns towards her staid companion, her graceful limbs concealed by no jealous drapery, but rather set off by the red mantle lying near, and the thick, tangling tresses of golden hair falling over her snowy shoulders. What shades, what magic colouring

enchant the eye in these glorious works of Titian, he who created at pleasure the entire circle of Olympus —free, open, and serene—the very perfection of the beautiful!

Hard by hangs Giorgione's "David," clad in a complete suit of silver-steel, standing out from the canvas with the power of a basso-relievo, the very personification of a chivalrous knight, though, sooth to say, as little indicative of the young Israelite as possible. This picture is a fine specimen of the painter's austere, emphatic manner.

I have generally an objection to *chefs-d'œuvre*, and will frankly confess that I care neither for Raphael's "Entombment"—to my mind a feeble, inexpressive group, always admitting the extreme beauty of some of the heads—or for Correggio's "Danaë," a picture where connoisseurs profess to admire the finish of his *chiaro-oscuro* and the transparent brilliancy of the lights. To me she appears a mincing, ill-limbed, quite unattractive nymph—ungracefully sprawling on a couch, and not at all worthy the fuss Jupiter made about her.

Nor do I care to dwell on Garofalo's great picture, stiff and mannered in grouping, though admirably coloured; but my eye rests with delight on that noblest of Raphael's portraits, called "Cæsar Borgia," where the painter has evoked so vivid and imposing a

likeness of that depraved but romantic man, whose character horrifies yet delights one by the alternate depths of wickedness and bravery, of cruelty and intellect, that chequer his life. He alone dared to cherish the project of uniting the conflicting claims of divided and prostrate Italy under his single sway—a project his intellectual superiority, headlong courage, and consummate chicanery might have matured and perfected, had death not cut him off in the midst of his stormy career. There, encased in that frame, he appears; and every one who has ever heard his once dreaded name can read his character in those bold, commanding eyes, which seem to follow one round the room like the eyes of an evil spirit.

I delight in the murmuring fountain splashing melodiously over the porphyry pedestal in the centre of the great hall, the only sound that breaks the silence of those endless rooms. And I delight, too, in the chamber of mirrors, where painted garlands and festoons obscure the brilliant glass which they are intended to decorate. Cupids lurk among the flowers, and roll in very joyousness under their perfumed shade; while gilding and stucco, and statues and marbles, enrich the walls and the ceiling around. Even for stately, palatial Rome this is a glorious old palace, and my memory will often fondly return

to it, summoning back the pleasant hours I have dreamed away in its silent halls.

From the Borghese Palace I ordered the carriage to drive by the Corso towards the Aventine. I have already celebrated that "street of palaces," perhaps the grandest specimen of domestic architecture in the world—withal the gayest, busiest place in all Rome, swarming with carriages and foot-passengers from morning until night. The Corso to me bears the impress of a perpetual *festa*, arising, I suppose, from reminiscences of the Carnival and those glorious concluding two hours of the "Moccoli," when its lofty sides become transformed into cavernous precipices of incessantly-moving lights, glittering and sparkling with an eccentric will-o'-the-wisp brilliancy, that puts the pale stars to shame. At the top of the Corso the dark turrets of the Austrian ambassador's palace frown down on the ever-gathering crowd below—all that remains of the feudal ages in Rome. Built, like the Farnese and so many other palaces, from the spoils of the Coliseum, it was once inhabited by Charles VIII., when, full of young and untaught presumption, that carpet-knight descended into Italy, as he imagined, to behold and to conquer, until the Keys of St. Peter and the Lion of Venice gave him such sore blows he was glad to return to "la belle France." This imposing

structure, more a fortress than a palace, is the only spot in Rome which really preserves the characteristics of the middle ages. From hence the intriguing court of Vienna now, as in past ages, watches the manœuvres of the Vatican—the old combat of Ghibelline and Guelph revived—only now the fight is waged with pens, and not with swords. Connected with the Piazza and Palazzo di Venezia is the glowing little church of San Marco, the glittering new-fledged daughter of a glorious time-honoured mother, against whose walls beat the placid waves of the blue Adriatic. Near at hand a whole faubourg of palaces raise their proud heads in mutual rivalry—the Doria, the Altieri, and the Torlonia, where that citizen keeps his state by the side of Rome's most ancient nobles. Presiding over the district appears the sumptuous church of the Gesù, dark and sombre in its magnificence as the pages of its annals. Here, in a gorgeous chapel, lapped in a funereal urn of bronze and gold, under a winding-sheet of marble, with precious stones and Oriental alabaster heaped around, the whole surmounted by an enormous globe of lapis-lazuli, lies Ignatius Loyola—his mausoleum as resplendent as his life was poor. Now art and nature emulate each other in its adornment; statues people the lofty aisles; pictures animate the glittering altars; the rarest marbles sustain the roof;

and the most precious metals form the capitals. His history is written on the walls in marble and in bronze, and an image of solid silver adorns the altar. Enthusiastic, devoted, brave, the Spanish monk was the latest, and perhaps the strongest, support of the Church. Its foundations, sapped by Luther, were sustained by Loyola. Strange contrast! the Guelphic shrine of Loyola hard by the Ghibelline palace of the Austrian Cæsar! Theocracy and feudality face to face, measuring each other like two athletes in an arena! Another palace is near, forming a part of this suggestive corner, but, like the history of its race, it lies detached—that of Madame Mère, where once resided Letitia Bonaparte, the mother of the plebeian Charlemagne, that ruler who, if fate had spared him, would have really established throughout Italy *lo buon stato* of which poor Rienzi dreamed. The silent halls are gloomy in deep shadows, as though sympathising with the sorrows of the modern Niobe, who saw her children drop off one by one in the flower of their age—last of all, that grandson hailed king of this Rome whose cupolas he was destined never to behold.

But I have been tempted to linger on my road, and at this rate shall never complete, as I desire, the day that I have chalked out. Let us on to the Aventine, once divided from the Palatine and the Capitoline

Hills, in the days when history was young, by a marsh so profound that the plebs of Rome could only reach their favourite hill in boats. On we go—skirting the open ground where stands the temple of Vesta, the prettiest ruin perhaps in the world, its base washed by the Tiber, and the church, known as the Bocca della Verità, once a temple dedicated to Ceres—mounting an ascent, up the steep side of the Aventine, where none but Roman horses could have kept their footing, to say nothing of dragging a heavy carriage after them. I was extremely alarmed at finding our centre of gravity so utterly unsupported; but as the Italian coachman only laughed at my fears, and declared it would be a *vergogna* towards himself if I did not allow him to proceed, I was fain to sit still and resign myself to my fate. Arrived at the summit, horrid, envious walls rose up, bordering lonely lanes which opened out in various directions. Not a soul appeared—not a sound was heard, save the busy hum of men below, blended with the rushing waters of the Tiber. Above, all was solitude and desolation. The very ruins are no more; destruction and time have not spared a stone. The Aventine possesses only suggestive recollections. Instead of being crowned by the sacred Grove dedicated to the Furies, it is belted by a noble zone of churches, which I proposed to visit. The walls, however, were

abominable, impenetrable; and I could only dismount and dream of Hercules and his victory over the ancient monster, and remember the unpropitious augury of Remus, and rebuild in my own mind the magnificent shrines and temples that once uprose on this hill in honour of Diana, erected by the united Latin tribes in emulation of her great fane at Ephesus—the stately edifices in honour of Juno, and of the Bona Dea, who sat enthroned, crowned with her mural coronet. It was on the Aventine that the last Gracchus retired to die—that Marius was born—and, more interesting still, that the second separation of the senate from the people occurred after the death of Virginia in the Forum. Those words of fire in which he dedicated the soul of Appius to the infernal gods had no sooner been spoken by Virginius than the plebeians, goaded to madness, retired to the Aventine; but not before the body of the slaughtered Virginia had been borne in solemn procession through the city, followed by the Roman matrons and damsels strewing flowers, jewels, and locks of their own hair as offerings to her offended manes.

Virginius, on returning to Rome from Mount Algidus with the revolted legions, encamped on the Aventine. Here, too, were situated those once beautiful Horti Serviliani, in whose groves Nero took

refuge when he fled from his golden house during the sedition that cost him his life. The Tiber lay invitingly at his feet, as it winds round the abrupt slopes of the Aventine, and he determined to end his life by a plunge in its waters; but, pusillanimous and undecided, he, who was unworthy to live, wanted courage to die!

Would that the lonely vineyards around could have upheaved and discovered the ruins which long centuries have confided to their bosoms! Not a vestige was here to assist the imagination; and cabbages, lettuces, and endive sprouted under the pale olive-trees in the most provokingly commonplace manner, as if to drive away all classical enthusiasm.

Along the centre of the hill extends a broad road, where stand three churches—Santa Sabina, San Alessio, and the Priorato—without doubt erected on the site of pagan temples. I tried in vain to obtain admission to San Alessio; but I penetrated into its neighbour (only divided from it by a garden), and entered a *cortile*, within which stands the dignified but modern-looking church of Santa Sabina, on the supposed site of the temple of Juno Regina. It might have served as a portico to a city of the dead, so desolate was its aspect. Grass grew in the *cortile*, and moss had gathered round the columns. Unbroken silence prevailed: the very birds were silent, and I felt actually

afraid of waking the melancholy echoes by pulling a bell at one of the great doors. An inscription over the door, in mosaic, informed me that the church stood on the site of Santa Sabina's house, who suffered martyrdom at Rome during the persecution of Adrian. A church was erected to her honour as early as the year 430. Sabina was an Umbrian widow, noble and wealthy, who became a Christian through the zealous teaching of her maid Seraphina, by birth a Syrian. These details were highly interesting while contemplating the church, although to those at a distance they may possibly appear trite and unpalatable.

After waiting some time—for in Italy patience becomes one of those cardinal virtues one is forced daily to practise—a boy appeared and opened the church, a fine large building of basilican form, but exceedingly damp and chilly, with scarcely a vestige of antiquity remaining. In a side chapel is one of the most beautiful pictures in Rome, the "Virgin of the Rosario," painted by Sassoferrato, which, being hung in a good light, is seen to great advantage. It is a sweet and most delicately beautiful composition, coloured with a transparent clearness worthy of Raphael. Well may it be called a perfect jewel. It reminded me of those pretty verses (a remnant of the republic) addressing the Virgin as—

"Maria della bionda testa
I capelli son fila d'oro,
Rimirando quel bel tesoro,
Tutti gli angeli fan festa."

The Virgin, a beautiful creature, though not too much idealised, draped in red, presents the infant Saviour to San Dominico and Santa Catarina of Siena, who, habited as a nun, kneels at her feet. There is a sweet youthfulness in the figure of the saint which is extremely touching; a sort of devotional *abandon* in her prostrate attitude full of expression. Beautiful angels, graceful as Albano's Cupids, hover above, bearing a red flag or drapery over the Virgin, the warm tones of which harmonise charmingly with her robe and the white lily at her feet. Long could I have gazed on that picture had not the damp cold of the church warned me to withdraw.

Tradition says that within the garden stands an olive-tree planted by St. Dominic during his residence here, after he left San Sixto near the Porta Sebastiana, a convent he gave up to some vagrant nuns who had wandered somewhat too freely before he undertook the reform of their order.

I left the church and strolled along the summit of the Aventine, silent and musing as all nature around. The sun shone hotly, though in January; and all around prevailed that death-like repose peculiar to

mid-day in Italy. I wandered into the open *cancello* of a villa, and followed a dark walk of overarching box and ilex, on to a stone terrace overlooking the city, which lay at my feet, divided by the river into two unequal portions. There was the Ponte Rotto, now broken no longer, a handsome iron suspension-bridge connecting the old Roman arches yawning on either side of the river. Beyond, in the centre of the current, was the island of the Tiber, with its ship-like prow, still retaining the artificial appearance of a vessel which the ancient Romans gave to the spot where stood the once magnificent temple of Esculapius. On the opposite or Trastevere side, gardens filled with richly-laden orange and lemon trees enlivened the long sombre lines of the houses, flinging back the sun's rays, and lighting up the bright globes of fruit that clustered on the dark boughs; the Janiculum backing the prospect broken by villas and casinos, with here and there a solitary pine-tree.

The church of the Priorato is situated in this romantic garden, belonging now to Cardinal Marini, and incorporated into his villa.. Within the church, its walls all white as the driven snow, lie monumental effigies of Knights of Malta in full armour, carved in marble, stretched in stern repose, each on his funereal pile. What recollections of daring courage and chivalric

devotion to a noble cause does not this solitary spot, consecrated to the heroic dead, suggest! No names mark the resting-places of these once valiant warriors; but in the heavenly chronicle preserved above, their memories may not be forgotten. All hail to these gallant knights, sleeping tranquilly their last slumber on the silent Aventine!

The woman custode threw open the wide door, and a glorious view burst into sight. Rome was invisible, but the windings of the Tiber through the leafy groves called Campi del Popolo Romano, and the desolate Monte Testaccio, surmounted by a single cross, occupied the foreground. Beyond lay the low, marshy Campagna towards Ostia, broken by the magnificent basilica of San Paolo fuori le Mura, surrounded by vineyards and gardens, the trees just bursting into snowy blossoms. All save this bright spot was indescribably melancholy. In the surrounding plain, malaria, ruin, decay, and pestilence unite to form a wilderness noxious in summer both to man and beast. The wind sighed gently as it rose from the plain, fanning the deep woods of the garden, like the voice of Nature mourning over the desolation of this once rich and pleasant land.

I turned into a little lawn in the surrounding garden, where grew an immense date-tree, at whose

foot ran a little streamlet, issuing from a broken fountain, presided over by some mutilated god of ancient Rome, now shorn of his fair proportions, "sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything," as the melancholy Jacques says. By this time the whole population of the custode's family having gathered round the *forestiera*, all repeating the usual cry of "*Danmi qualche cosa*," I beat a rapid retreat.

The roads along the Aventine, now mounting up, then dashing down, covered with rough masses of unbroken rubbish, would be the despair of any but Roman coachmen, who possess the art of teaching their horses to climb like cats. Down at last we jolted into a deep hollow at the back of the Forum, to a dirty, miserable open space, where the wretched malefactors of modern Rome are executed. A more dreary place to die in can scarcely be conceived.

It was but a moment, and the intervening walls shut out the dreary arena where crime sighs out its last wretched groan; and I found myself descending into a kind of hole before an ancient church in my search for the Cloaca Maxima, whither I was bound. Beside the church, and much below the level of the surrounding buildings, stands a well-preserved marble arch, low, but of massive proportions, having four distinct arched entrances, marking the meeting of

four ancient highways. Rows of niches, separated from each other by small columns, still remain, indicating where statues once stood; and it has a solid, substantial look, defying even now time and decay. The arch is that of Janus Quadrifrons, and the church is that of St. George, whose name, joined to our national cry of "Merrie England," still defies the world, as in ages gone by.

Close beside the church (a grotesque old pile, sinking into mother-earth out of sheer weakness and old age) stands another arch, almost incorporated into the building, richly decorated with arabesques and bas-reliefs, erected to Septimus Severus by the bankers and tradesmen of the city. On one side appears the emperor, with his consort Julia; on the other, their sons Geta and Caracalla, though the figure of the former has been effaced by order of the brother who so barbarously caused his death.

Here was a rich old corner that detained me some time, though no Cloaca could I discover, and the solitude was unbroken by the appearance of even a beggar. I was just going away in despair, when I was attracted towards a pretty garden in which some labourers were working. On my asking where was the Cloaca, one of the men, indicating by an expressive Italian gesture his knowledge of what I asked, led me along a little

pathway to a screen of orange-trees skirting a bank, from whence the ground fell rapidly towards a deep watery ditch, penetrating the adjoining houses through an arch, precisely as a stream passes under a mill.

"Ecco," said he, "la Cloaca."

The place swarmed with washerwomen, who scrub perpetually at small reservoirs in the thickness of the wall, under the massive vaults once the pride of Rome.

I was infinitely disappointed, and could only marvel at the high trumpetings conveyed in the sound and fame of a name—nothing but a name—which leads half Europe to gaze on an impure ditch! It is all very well for books and antiquarians to tell us that those blocks of stone are of Etruscan architecture, and were hewn and constructed in the time of Tarquinius Priscus, fifth king of Rome; but these details do not alter the fact that the much-extolled Cloaca, through which Strabo says a waggon loaded with hay might once pass, must now be classed as one of the many disagreeable objects from which one turns disgusted away.

While I stood gazing on the scene around, a Cistercian monk entered the garden, dressed in white, with the red and blue cross peculiar to the order conspicuous on his breast. He had spied me out, and came to ask

for "elemosina," that universal chorus of the modern Roman tongue. He was a venerable-looking old man, and I fell into conversation with him.

"You are English?" said he.

I owned the soft impeachment.

"You are a Catholic?"

"No," replied I.

"Are there," said he, "many convents in England?"

"Very few," said I, "and we wish that there were still fewer. Monks may be very well here—in questo paese—but we are too active and busy in the North to admire them."

"Alas!" said he with a sigh, "la Madonna vi aiuta! Our great convent," continued he, "is in France; there are none of our order in England, dove per lo più so bene che ci sono pochi Cristiani"—(where, indeed, I know there are scarcely any Christians)—such being the opinion Catholics express when they speak frankly of *us*, who esteem ourselves the lamps of the world, the sun and centre of moral civilisation! We are not even Christians! *O miserere!*

In this obscure neighbourhood are the now nearly invisible remains of the Circus Maximus, under the shadow of the Palatine, which rises abruptly aloft,

crowned with the stupendous ruins of the palace of the Cæsars. The Circus, situated in a vale between that hill and the Aventine, must ever be interesting as the well-known site of the rape of the Sabine women.

Successive rulers, from the time of Tarquinius Priscus to the Emperor Claudius, enlarged and embellished this the grandest monument of Rome before the erection of the Flavian Coliseum. Gold, marbles, statues, and altars were not wanting for the adornment of this the rallying-point of two hundred and sixty thousand spectators, where horse, chariot, and foot-races, wrestling, boxing, and combats with wild beasts, varied their amusement. On the spina passing down the centre of the arena were erected the two obelisks now adorning the Piazza del Popolo and the square of the Lateran, at whose base were placed the bands of music that enlivened the audience during the games. Of the vast multitudes who age after age applauded the skill of the charioteers and the courage of the gladiators, history only records the gratitude of the lion to the generous Androcles, who, being exposed to fight with wild beasts, was recognised by a lion from whose paw he had some time before extracted a thorn, and who, instead of tearing his antagonist to pieces, fawned upon him in the midst of that great circus, and

licked his hand. Even the iron Romans were interested by so touching a sight, and the gratitude of the noble animal saved his benefactor's life.

Alas for the utilitarian nineteenth century! the site of this superb arena is now converted into a gasometer, as red and as flaunting and ill-odoured as any gasometer in any little country town; and there is a pert little white house in the centre of the yard, and a cast-iron railing in front fresh from Birmingham, and all kinds of modern abominations desecrating the soil where kings, dictators, and Cæsars held their imperial state, their gorgeous togas sweeping the mosaic floors as they passed out of their gilded palaces on the Palatine down through the marble colonnades of the stately Forum, to witness the cruel pageant displayed on "a Roman holiday."

Leaving this part of the city, I drove by the Coliseum towards the magnificent basilica of San Giovanni Laterano, the parent church of Rome, whose lofty porticoes and domes crown the Cœlian Hill, and are approached through a long park-like avenue extending from the grand façade of the Lateran in a straight line to the church of Santa Helena, a large and stately edifice famous for the possession of a large fragment of the true cross brought from Jerusalem by the Empress Helena, and enshrined in a chapel which

no woman may enter. Passing the church—now closed, as it was past *mezzogiorno*—we proceeded on through high walls enclosing villas and gardens; by great ruined aqueducts whose arches, majestic in ruin, rose up before us like visions of the mighty past; on to where Porta Pia opens into the Campagna. About a mile along the road, paved like a street, (and that a Roman one, being as rough and uneven as possible), stands the Villa Torlonia, for which I was bound.

The villa, or casino, or mansion, is stuffy and ill ventilated, with a great central saloon, surrounded by a suite of small rooms little better than cupboards. There is a general want of comfort, and a great deal of fine furniture, gilding, and mosaics—

> "Palladian walls, Venetian doors,
> Golden roofs, and stucco floors."

It was evident, in making the circuit of the grounds, that the proprietor had been haunted by visions of an English garden, for I came on stunted fir-trees, low shrubberies, little ponds, and rank plateaux of grass, jumbled together in a manner quite irrational for this country. Then I reached a little valley, where thousands of violets scented the air; and beyond this valley a walk, which I followed, between high banks of grass, their precipitous slopes planted with aloes and cactus,

upheaving their grotesque leaves towards the sun. The hill was tunnelled; darkness succeeded to the bright outer day; and I found myself in an immense artificial cave, formed of masses of rock and the roots and branches of gigantic trees, where rough stones, stalactites, gurgling water-falls crossed by rustic bridges, and mysterious winding walks, led to nooks and grottoes—

> "Where lingering drops from min'ral roofs distil,
> And pointed crystals break the sparkling rill."

Along one of these labyrinthine paths I descended into what appeared utter darkness; but, rounding a projecting mass of rock, I emerged into a glorious conservatory, entirely constructed of the most gorgeous-coloured glass, forming stars, rosettes, and diamonds of the richest patterns. The transition from the dark cave to jocund, many-coloured day was worthy of Fairyland. The floor of this beautiful glass-house was covered with gaudy encaustic pavement; flowers garlanded the roof, and hung in heavy, many-tinted branches from the pillars, catching the sunbeams, as they played antic tricks, slanting athwart the brilliant glass, and casting deep, unnatural streaks and shadows among the green leaves.

Conspicuous on the armorial escutcheon of the Torlonias is the column, on which, typically and actually

the glory of his house reposes, and to which he is entitled by his marriage with a princess of the noble blood of the Colonnas.

My day had already been varied enough, but there were still further contrasts in waiting, as it was not more than three o'clock, and our list not yet completed. How intoxicating it was thus to surrender oneself to the varying impressions, experiences, scenes, sights, and wonders around, making one day in Rome richer, fuller, and more satisfying than years of ordinary life! I re-entered the grand old walls that yet girdle Rome—those walls so broken by ruined towers, and castellations, and mouldering arches, and long avenues of piers and buttresses, with here and there higher towers flanking a huge, massive Etruscan-looking gate breaking the shadows that began to fall, and giving egress to the bright sunshine.

We passed through a maze of dirty cavernous streets, damp and mouldy, and unwarmed by the life-giving sun, to where the Forum of Trajan sinks down below the modern level of the city, in an oblong piazza strewed with broken columns and capitals, and surrounded by a square of shabby, commonplace houses.

Let us pause for a moment before proceeding onwards under the portico of one of those Siamese-twin churches flanking its extremity, and recall a few of the recollec-

tions that spontaneously arise. All the world knows that the sculptured marble column—in which I can see no beauty—rising before us, once served as a pedestal to the statue of Trajan, whose life was passed in continually running over the world in search of fresh enemies and renewed battles. He who must be execrated as one of the persecutors of the Christians is now dethroned from his lofty stand, and replaced by a statue of St. Peter, erected in rather questionable taste by Sixtus V. The Forum beneath was designed by Domitian, and executed by Trajan, under the superintendence of that same architect, Apollodorus, who afterwards lost his life for daring to utter an unfavourable criticism on the temple of Venus at Rome, designed by the Emperor Adrian. Ammianus Marcellinus speaks of it as a unique monument, worthy of the admiration of the very gods, and quite impossible to describe by any mere words, "language being utterly insufficient to portray its grandeur and magnificence." Looking at it as I do, all this appears incredible. Dirt, mud, and rubbish are now the characteristics of that space once occupied by porticoes and colonnades, equestrian statues and triumphal arches. On this spot once stood the Ulpian Basilica, to which attach memories deeply interesting to every Christian. Here Constantine the Great, seated in the tribune of that superb

edifice, surrounded by dignitaries, senators, and princes, a goodly company, where the West greeted the East—a mixed audience, however, many of them being pagans, who listened with horror and rage—in the presence of the assembled multitude, whose loud and frequent applause, echoing down the triple aisles and into every columned recess, showing that Christianity had at last found many believers—here, I say, Constantine proclaimed "Christianity the religion of the world, and exhorted all to abjure the errors of a superstition the offspring of ignorance, folly, and vice."

These words, that still sound, after the lapse of fifteen centuries, grand, solemn, and impressive as when pronounced by the imperial voice in the grandest building of ancient Rome, were received by a populace mad with joy and enthusiasm, who for two hours echoed a chorus of "malediction on those who denied the Christians," repeating "that the God of the Christians was the only God, that his enemies were the enemies of Augustus, and that the temples should now be shut, never more to be reopened; and calling on the emperor to banish from Rome that very day and hour every priest of the false gods." But Constantine (whom God seemed to have inspired with the very spirit of wisdom becoming so solemn an occasion) replied, "That there was this distinction between the service of God and

that of idols—that the one was voluntary, and the other forced, God being honoured by the sincere affection and belief of the intelligent creature he had created in his image. Therefore," continued he, "let those who refuse to become Christians fear nothing; for, however much we desire that they should follow our pious example, it is alone by persuasions, and not by force, we would induce them. However, we declare that we unite ourselves by a firmer friendship and support to those who embrace Christianity." Having thus spoken, the emperor, glorified before God and man, descended from his throne, and, passing out of the great portico by the equestrian statue of Trajan, proceeded to his palace at the Lateran in the midst of the applause of his subjects, pagans as well as Christians, after which all the city was brilliantly illuminated. A spot consecrated in the history of Christianity, as was the Forum of Trajan, in itself the most architecturally beautiful monument in Rome, was spared even by the ruthless barbarians, but towards the ninth and tenth centuries Rome was given up to internal disorders and excesses of all kinds under the Popes John X. and XI., and to that period may be referred the ruin of this, as well as many of its other most ancient sites.

From the Forum of Trajan I hastened to the church of San Giuseppe-of-the-Carpenters near by, beneath

which lie the Mamertine prisons. The exterior (fronting the Roman Forum, only divided from that of Trajan by a small block of houses) is prettily painted in bright southern-looking frescoes: a double staircase conducts to the portico, somewhat raised from the ground.

I passed into the interior of the small church—its walls almost covered with *ex voto* offerings—and after some difficulty succeeded in unearthing the custode, whose presence was indispensable, as I intended descending to the Mamertine prisons below. The custode, good man, was well used to his trade, and soon produced the torch which was to lighten our darkness in our descent under the arch of Septimus Severus into the very bowels of classical Rome. An iron wicket guards the entrance into the vaults, from which we descended to the first dungeon, of rather large proportions when compared with the dismal prisons of Venice. But the rigour and sternness of the republican Romans are visible even in the architecture, the walls being formed of great blocks of solid tufa joined without cement, like the cyclopean walls of the Etruscan cities that crown the Latin hills.

On one side of the ceiling were the remains of what once was a trap-door, now walled up, through which the bodies of prisoners condemned to the lingering

tortures of starvation were drawn up after death. This upper prison is now converted into a chapel, and has an altar bearing hideous effigies of St. Peter and St. Paul, painted and coloured according to the profane ideas of Italian superstition. Nothing would have been visible but for the torch carried by our custode, a garrulous old man, who had no scruple in making the solemn walls echo to his gossiping, interlarded with many a "*Si, signora*" — "*Mi favorisce di qui*" — "*Vuole vedere di la,*" &c. Down some steep and narrow stairs we descended to the lower prison—small, low, confined—the great masses of unhewn stone just over our heads. This is the Tullian dungeon, authentically traced as existing as far back as the reign of Ancus Martius, having been completed by Servius Tullius, whence its name. In this suffocating hole, where the infernal gods of darkness reign supreme, and a heavy and unwholesome air only penetrates through a small round hole opening into the upper prison, died by starvation that gallant son of the Desert, the brave Jugurtha, who nobly defended his country against the Roman arms. Here his ardent spirit burst its earthly bonds in solitude and darkness, deep down in the earth, while, regardless of his unmerited fate, the Roman senators and proud patricians, swelling in the pride of power, gathered their ample togas around them as

they swept through the stately colonnades of the neighbouring Forum. Here, too, by order of Cicero, or rather of his wife, the haughty Terentia, the wretched Romans concerned in Catiline's conspiracy were strangled.

Cicero, with all the reputation won by his eloquently-rounded periods, was, after all, but a sophist and a lawyer, a plebeian *parvenu;* first, the panegyrist of Marius, then the flatterer of Sylla; vain and irresolute, without daring and without genius, quite incapable of enforcing so signal a punishment on the conspirators, had Terentia not insisted on its execution. In these prisons died also the vile Sejanus, that cruel and degraded panderer to the base passions of the brutal Tiberius.

How often has it happened to me to fall a musing over the blackened walls that have witnessed great, horrible, or famous events—to inquire as it were into their history, entreat them to become audible, and to impart their hidden knowledge! I found myself star-gazing in this fashion on the gaunt stones before me, while the custode rattled away his little chapter of knowledge to my companions. But could ye—O mysterious masses!—speak with tongues of brass, and tell of long-past scenes enacted under your deep and fatal shadow, it would neither be of Jugurtha nor of

Catiline I would question ye, but of the blessed Peter, who for nine months is said to have hallowed ye by his presence! Historical tradition confidently names this as the locality where he was imprisoned, and as such it will be venerated by every denomination of Christians until the day when the earth shall exist no more. I cannot give expression to the contending feelings that agitated me as I glanced round on the very walls where his eyes had rested, and placed my hand on the very pillar to which he was chained, when I pictured his sufferings, his heavenly consolations, and horrible death. Such emotions are overwhelming, and can only be realised in full force on the very localities where, as with Thomas the Apostle, one's finger touches the sacred marks, and the doubting soul is, as it were, forced into belief. Here is the spring said to have gushed miraculously forth out of the solid stones (and solid indeed they are, and of Etruscan massiveness) in order to enable the Apostles Peter and Paul to baptize, during their imprisonment, the keepers of the prison, Processus and Martinian, who were so powerfully affected by the teaching and example of the Apostles, that, on the return of Nero from his Grecian expedition, they suffered martyrdom in the persecution that then commenced. It is highly improbable that a spring should voluntarily have been enclosed in a dungeon

dedicated to agony and solitary death. The water wells up bright and pure, never rising or falling, and is now enclosed in a kind of setting of masonry, and covered by a bronze lid. After the emotions and recollections excited by these prisons I could see no more; the day, too, was already falling, and the light, when we re-ascended, had become pale and dim. I had, during the last few hours, felt, admired, and examined so much, my mind was oppressed by the weight of recollections. On returning home I caught up a pen in *furore*, determined to convey on paper, however faintly, some idea of the variety offered by one day's sight-seeing at Rome.

VIII.

The Artists' Festa.

ONE day, and another day, had been talked of for the artists' festa, annually celebrated at Rome, unless wars, or rumours of wars, or bloody red republicanism scare the old walls of the Cæsars from their propriety.

A certain Monday was fixed, and we set forth, a merry circle, chiefly of American friends, determined, like the charity children sent down by the railway for an excursion in the country, "to make a day of it." Eight o'clock saw us emerging from the Porta Salara, with its *entourage* of beautiful villas each enshrouded in woods of laurel, box, and ilex, traversed by long vista-walks of clipped yew and cypress heavy in unbroken shade, with terraces bordered by statues, and balustrades leading down long flights of majestic steps to the sparkling fountains below—abodes such as no land but Italy can boast. Just now the gardens are full of roses, flowering everywhere in luxuriant

masses, specially the white and yellow Banksian roses, which fling themselves over the high walls, and festoon the very trees with wondrous-clustered blossoms. Honeysuckles, tulips, and bright ranunculuses caught our passing sight in the gay parterres. Especially, too, did I admire the groves of Judas-trees, real mountains of purple blossoms, without a single green leaf to break the gorgeous colour. They are generally planted near the marble basins of the fountains, in advance of the deeper woods which serve as an admirable background. How much have those to learn who never beheld the glorious burst of spring in this luxuriant land! that idyllic season realising all the glowing descriptions of the poets. The process of renewed and opening life, occupying long months in the cold North, mysterious Nature here accomplishes in a few days. The land, radiant with new life, puts on its vernal mantle of freshest green, its jewels of brightest flowers; even the sullen rocks and frowning ruins are embroidered with garlands of snowy May, and flowering grasses stream in the soft breeze. The turf becomes a perfect garden—cyclamens, anemones, crocuses, violets, poppies, and hyacinths growing in such profusion, that the sweet blossoms are wantonly trodden under foot. The woods too, those primæval fortresses of ancient trees, are painted with every tint and shade of green,

and vocal with innumerable nightingales, whose soft songs invite one to wander under the chequered shade, beside cool bubbling brooks and splashing fountains, all overarched by the heavens, serenely, beautifully blue.

At length we bade adieu to the zone of villas clasping like an enchanted circlet the grim city walls, and entered the Campagna—a sea of emerald green. In the direction of the Porta Salara it is beautifully varied by accidents of wood and dale, high waving headlands, and broad moory valleys, through which old Tiber flows majestically down from the fat lands of Tuscany. After descending a rocky ravine, we drove along a spacious level plateau, through which the river sweeps in many windings, bordered by hills—a region of wild craggy dells and far-stretching fells and hills, some black, rocky, and dreary, others clothed with low woods and stunted shrubs, crowned here and there with a ruined tower, or an old tomb standing out sharply against the sky. We were reminded of the object of our drive by meeting now and then a masker gaily caparisoned, on horseback; a poursuivant, all crimson and quarterings; or Stenterello, the Southern brother of "Punch," dressed in white; or a Chinaman in flowered drapery of chintz—most incongruous apparitions in that prairie wilderness. Behind, between the parting

hills, uprose the great dome of St. Peter's, sole evidence of the neighbouring city. After an hour's space we crossed the Ponte Salara, a fine old Roman bridge, built by Belisarius, and drew up at the Torre, close by an ancient tomb, surmounted by a mediæval tower, in whose foundations an "Osteria" shelters itself—ruin upon ruin, all desolate and decayed. Here a dense crowd of maskers were awaiting the arrival of the president of the sports, grouped at the base of the old tomb. Such a medley; *diamine! par impossibile!* Austrian generals mounted on donkeys, wearing great stars and orders of painted pasteboard, fighting imaginary duels with wooden swords bearing the motto, "*Non amazzo*" (I don't kill); hunters with guns, yards long, quite suitable to Glumdalclitch in a sporting mood; Mercury, fat and rosy, in a tin helmet, fringed chlamys, boots, and pantaloons; a negro; Hercules with his club, in Turkish trousers and worsted slippers; Don Quixote, with a real brass barber's basin on his head, riding a mule; and Ganymede, painted all over with bacchanalian devices, such as decorate wayside public-houses in this land of the vine; his shoulder-knots the bottoms of rush wine-flasks, and ivy and grapes painted all over his clothes—a walking "*Spaccio di Vino.*" He had no sinecure, by the way, Ganymede, pouring

out the wine to the thirsty throng all that livelong day. There were soldiers and gendarmes magnificent on donkeys which kicked, and now and then rolled in the road; and Venetians, in red velvet and pointed hats (recalling the dark gondolas, shooting through the bridges, and love, and intrigue, and mystery, and cloudless skies, and snowy churches, and tinkling guitars in dear Venice); and a male Pomona, embroidered all over with amber satin apples and green leaves; and the great sea-serpent on horseback, much encumbered by the wind continually catching his tail; also a priest of Jupiter with a patched eye; Chaucer in a red mantle, with gold bells, and a close blue hood with a tail, and pointed shoes, wearing spectacles too; and a Bedouin Arab, who drove out in a small gig made of basket-work, and invested himself with appropriate drapery of black and white in a quite off-handed manner, holding the horses' reins in his mouth, after which he offered us coffee out of a large pot; Medea driving about in an easy calash with two old women—getting in every one's way, and causing those gallant souls, the donkeys, to kick; and Paul Pry, with an eye-glass as big as his head, together with an unfortunate gentleman in black, of the melancholy time of our own first Charles; others in ruff and doublet, and hat and feathers, of the Spanish or Raleigh school. Many

characters, however, were quite indescribable, fluttering all over with oceans of variegated ribbon, others nearly buried in flowers, and some crowned with ivy and with bay—the only wreath, possibly, they may ever win, so let them enjoy it *pro tempore*, poor souls! Harlequins and Shylocks—quite correct from the traditions of the Ghetto; a schoolboy with his satchel and tight-fitting "whites;" a Greek with red cap and mantle looking die-away and romantic; a mediæval page, pretty enough to please "a fair lady's eye;" the Postillon de Longjumeau in pink and white, a dapper little fellow bestriding a huge horse, and a *vetturino* in long boots and a laced coat.

But I have done: how can I describe one-half, or give the faintest idea of that motley *charivari*, merry, noisy, many-coloured? The troops of donkeys, some laden with splendid mediæval heroes in a red stocking, perhaps two; horses bearing gentlemen in mufti—steady married men, "who would not condescend, could not think," &c., of such tomfoolery; the waving banners, the trumpets, the braying of the innumerable donkeys (which evidently felt themselves specially ill used and victimised on this occasion, and with reason); the laughter, the cursing of the cabmen (to speak nationally) who had come out from Rome, and were indignant at any interference with their wretched

cattle (one little man in particular got so violent, and gave utterance to such a volley of Italian oaths, I thought he would have had a fit; indeed, he was only stopped by the Austrian general belabouring him with his wooden sword), the Babel of languages, English, American, German, French, Italian, each louder than the other, but the Teutonic guttural decidedly predominating, as did the artists of that nation. In the midst of this universal hubbub, all eyes were suddenly directed to the bridge, where appeared a Red Indian crowned with waving ostrich's feathers, clad in skins, embroidered and edged with rich fringes, wearing a necklace of coral and big shells, his face painted and streaked with black, and crimson, and brown, mounted on a big horse covered with leopard-skins. His quiver and arrows were slung at his back, and with a rifle in his hand he galloped forward in a wild, reckless way, looking altogether quite terrific. Never did I behold such a happy masquerade. He was received with shouts of applause as he dashed over the bridge, and he had not been on the ground five minutes before three different artists implored him to sit to them for his portrait. Next went forth the cry that the president was coming, and the Germans cried "Platz!" and the Italians "Largo!" and the English "Make way," and a passage was cleared

through the crowd for a huge triumphal car slowly passing over the bridge, wreathed and enveloped with laurel, and olive, and bay, containing a knight of portly and noble bearing, clad in cloth of gold, and wearing a helmet. This was the president, a very Bacchus-god, whose broad, smiling countenance told of merry nights spent with boon companions over the rich wine, more than of days of study. His helmet was garlanded with vine and ivy leaves, and he looked the very condensation of the frolic, good-humour, cosmopolite jest and merriment of the festa. Yes, he was well chosen, that president; and there was a large and genial soul under that massive, manly form, that looked out from his pleasant blue eyes, dancing with glee as he bowed and waved his helmet, while the thrilling shouts arose of "Hoch lebe der Präsident!" "Evviva!" "Hurrah!" joined to the firing of mimic cannons, the inarticulate shouts and cries of many dialects, the braying of the donkeys, and the imprecations with which Medea and the two old ladies driving in the easy calash were loaded for eternally getting in everybody's way.

Then the president, sitting royally on his car, distributed medals to all the artists present, quite appropriate to the occasion, being half *bajocchi* (the very smallest copper coin) strung with blue ribbon; these were fastened in the button-hole, and worn along with

the tin drinking-cups everybody—the married dignitaries, as also the melancholy Charles I. characters—slung over his shoulders. The ambassadors were then presented; the Chinaman and his attendant, bearing an umbrella over him of brown holland, covered with dragons and monsters of coloured paper; and the Turkish minister, and the Grand Llama, and the Red Indian. Speeches were made—the deep, manly voice of the president often audible—and then songs were sung, and after that all the cavalry, the gendarmes and distinguished military authorities on donkeys, and lastly, the foot, were marshalled on the grass of the surrounding Campagna. One unfortunate little donkey, bearing a heavy cavalier, out of sheer desperation, positively lay down and rolled at the gate, overcome by the prospect of its manifold misfortunes. But it wouldn't do; he was dragged up and forced to join in the muster, and then the procession was formed —the president in his pagan car, drawn by great white oxen with scarlet housings, leading the way, followed by the banners and the horse and donkey-men, Medea in the easy calash, now fairly under way, the Bedouin in his basket-gig, and lastly, a cart loaded with barrels of wine, wreathed with laurel and bay, which poor Ganymede will have to distribute, running about on those fat legs all day. Then the car-

riages fall in, and we all go driving farther out into the green wilderness so desolate and fair, along the river's bank, whose murmuring waters are rarely drowned by such strange sounds of holiday. The solitary road along which we pass is overshadowed by the past; the merry present finds there no sympathy: hills rise around, and beyond, on the opposite bank of the river, wooded heights stretch far away into infinite space, sweeping over the plain towards the far distant, just visible Monte Soracte; and near by are rocks of a sunburnt, ruddy tint, protruding through the grass in the fissures of the hills, giving a wild, characteristic look to an otherwise monotonous scene. We reach an opening opposite the river, flowing away with full majestic stream to the left; a broad valley, broken by a stream, cleaving asunder the low, rounded heights, and winding away through red-looking rocks, with nothing but a few ragged shrubs and tufted grass and brambles clinging to their sides. It is a sad and lonely place, like some old battle-ground heavy with the curses of the slain. There are deep grottoes, too, in the rocks, and on one side a precipitous mound of black stones and broken earth, difficult of access. On the summit of this mound the artists' banner is planted, and flutters gaily in the wind; for it is a fresh and breezy day, divided between delicious wafts

of sea breezes and a southern sun. Under the rocky mount a tent is erected for the dinner, beneath whose shade the ponderous wine-barrels are piled, followed by Ganymede ever in close attendance; and the president now, descending from the triumphal car, assembles his motley court on the hillside. The whole valley is peopled with incongruous groups of maskers scattered here and there; hundreds of spectators bivouac among the fissures, and crevices, and chasms of the rocks, and recline on *improvviso* divans on the fresh grass, forming a vast human amphitheatre, to witness the games below on the level ground. Loud laughter and sounds of mirth soon arouse the echoes of the hills, especially when Ganymede emerges from the tent, and rushes frantically about, bearing the wine-cup.

The games are announced. First came a donkey-race—those unhappy victims of the artists' rejoicing—with piteous brayings, being forced to carry large men, who urged them across a stream, which they positively refused. Few would go at all, being utterly regardless of the feelings of the mailed knights, and ambassadors, and nobles of high degree they bore, and the whole race ended in a grand *mêlée* and confusion. A thing very like a gibbet was then erected for riding at the ring, the riders being arranged on one side, all bearing lances, with which, dashing forward, they were

to carry off the ring from the hook. Chaucer, with his cap and bells, got a fall, Pomona rolled on the grass in company, and the Chinese ambassador, whose long plaits of tow he evidently considered a masterpiece, tumbled on the top of both, the Red Indian carrying off the ring amid shouts of laughter echoing from hill to hill. This game was repeated many times with various success; then the wine-bowl passed round, and the deep bass voice of the president was heard encouraging the sports; while the indignant donkeys brayed louder and louder, waking the whole Campagna to fresh fun and frolic. At last, when the sun had become intolerably hot, and the Bedouin had long settled himself down in the shade to drink coffee out of his large pot, the dinner was announced, and the president and his court, and the masquerade company generally, adjourned to the tent, where for the space of two hours they were lost to mortal ken under the shadows of the great wine-casks. Knots formed, too, among the spectators for eating and drinking, but there was no shade, not even a bush, to temper the sun's rays on the burning Campagna that mocked one with its fresh mantle of emerald green. I ate an excellent dinner, with the happiest, merriest party of Americans and Italians. We were perched on the summit of a rise, full in the sun, which neither umbrellas nor parasols could

render invincible, but we were so hungry we didn't mind it.

Last of all, when the day was waning, came the distribution of the prizes. The president, glittering in golden armour, took his stand in the centre, while one by one the victors approached him—humbly kneeling as he presented to each crockery vases of various shapes and sizes, which were received as treasures with delight and reverence, as also a draught of wine out of his own peculiar flagon, which Ganymede had to replenish very often that sultry day, I promise you. As each successive victor retired, bearing on high his earthen vessel, he was received with loud and vociferous acclamations: deified Cæsar, passing up the Forum and greeted by the assembled Quirites, was not more enthusiastically cheered. There was a mock solemnity about the whole scene that reminded one of an enacted *tableau vivant* out of Cervantes; it was the heroic age of knight-errantry admirably travestied and run mad. The grave and majestic demeanour of the president, his eyes alone twinkling with suppressed merriment, as he presented a crockery *scaldino* to Shylock, victor in the donkey-race, and addressed him in a speech of dignified eulogy on his gallant achievement; the gibberish conversation between himself and the Red Indian, the majestic and solemn salutations exchanged

with the ambassadors who advanced to take their leave, all was perfectly in keeping—the sublime of the burlesque. The beautiful "Am Rhein" was then sung in parts, as none but Germans and enthusiasts *can* sing it, the rocks and hills of the Campagna echoing each long-drawn note of the rich Northern melody. It still lingers in my ear; I think I hear again the rise and fall of those many manly voices, and see their upturned faces beaming with life, and light, and energy, now deepening into one overwhelming sentiment of national remembrance. When it was all over the excitable Italians cried "Bravi" like perfect demoniacs, and rent the very air with their wild applause. The president, his broad honest face flushed with emotion, then advanced into the centre of the throng, and with outstretched arms, like a very pagan patriarch, closed the rejoicings of the day by drinking one long, grand, universal *lebehoch* (health) to all languages, nations, people. "The entire world," exclaimed he, "I greet in this last loving cup!" There was something catholic in this grand convivial salute to the universe, and it reminded me (not, as Hamlet says, "to speak it profanely") of that thrilling scene by which the Roman Church winds up its Easter rejoicings, when the venerable pontiff, from the central balcony of St. Peter's, with outstretched arms in-

cludes all the nations of the earth in one solemn benediction.

After such a soul-stirring finale to a happy day, I returned home rejoicing to the eloquent city that now, as ever, speaks with tongues of living fire to all hearts and sympathies, nourishing in her mighty bosom art, genius, learning, and religion.

IX.

A Roman Steeple-chase—The Martyr-Church of Santa Martina and Accademia of San Luca—Footsteps of St. Peter and St. Paul—An English Hunt at Rome—Martyrdom of Sixtus II. and St. Lawrence—Church of St. Lawrence—A Singular Tradition—Circus of Romulus—Tomb of Cecilia Metella.

THERE is a lonely spot in the Campagna—lonely even for that desolate wilderness—situated in a bend of the river near the Ponte Nomentana, that most picturesque of all Roman bridges, with its castellated walls and towers engrafted on the solid masses of which it is formed. Weeping willows, and feathering pollards just bursting into the brightest tints of spring, sweep across the rapid stream flowing between high banks of grass carpeted with gayest flowers. Just beyond is a low, square-shaped mound, whose green sides are unbroken even by a furze-bush: that is the Mons Sacro, so celebrated in the republican annals as the spot where the commons, or *plebs*, retired on account of the great numbers confined for debt, until they were pacified and brought back to the city by the consuls. To the left a lonely expanse, encircled by low hills,

forms a natural amphitheatre, the deep and rapid river dividing it from the road; while farther on rises abruptly an eminence once crowned by the well-known city of Antemnæ, one of young Rome's bitterest rivals. The sides of the encircling hills are broken by patches of bright wheat, little dells shaded by low copse-wood, and here and there a solitary watch-tower.

I have visited that natural arena, singular for its wild symmetry, when all nature has been hushed; the only moving creatures being flights of birds whirling round in giddy circles ere they launch into the blue expanse—the only sound the bleating of the goats, as they follow the shepherd home to be milked—the only foreground objects great flocks of sheep, with here and there a wild, shaggy horse browsing or galloping at will. But to-day "how altered was its sprightlier scene!" for this same lonely spot is no other than the race-course; and to-day is the "steeple-chase," and all Rome has turned out to see the fun. Clouds of dust rising high in air indicate the road from the great city, sending forth its immense visitor and native population. Antiquity, and solitude, and contemplation are effectually put to the rout. The bridges heavy with memories of Rome—the old towers—the sacred mount—the hills—all echo to the rattling, talking, laughing multitude.

A grand stand, ornamented with bright red drapery, that told well among the universal shade of emerald green, was erected under the hills, and there the mass of the company gathered. I took my stand on a rising ground commanding the whole space, and found myself unexpectedly in good company. The French ambassadress was there in a picturesque riding-dress, reposing *à la* Phillis on the grass, quite rural and touching to behold, surrounded by a whole *état-major* of attachés and officers, fancying themselves rustic for the nonce. Well, there we stood, gentle and simple, rich and poor, noble and plebeian, forming a diadem on that grassy mound, and all gazing on the animated scene below.

At certain distances along the course, which extends about two miles, hurdles were erected; and there was a low, artificial wall, and a deep ditch which the people persisted in calling a *river*, which was not, however, at all formidable. Even an Italian might have ventured those leaps; but, considering discretion the better part of valour, they abstained from taking any part in such dangerous sport. Over the plain were scattered innumerable groups, and a vast crowd that ebbed and flowed to and fro; and then there were hundreds of carriages; and those *toujours perdrix* officers—an indispensable ingredient of every Roman

scene—the *carabinieri* keeping the course, and rushing violently about in pursuit of the unhappy and much-abused plebs. And there were fair equestrians, unmistakably Saxon, who condescended to curvet and canter in a show-off style quite refreshing to the *profanum vulgus*. Two knots of young priests clothed in scarlet (Greeks, I believe), not being allowed to descend among the mundane, stood on distant mounds, and grouped wonderfully well among the great universal ocean of green. Then there were contadine in picturesque dresses, and the poetical-looking made-up beggars who sit for models and congregate on the steps of the Trinità di Monti; and vendors of drinks—*acque buone*—screaming; and coachmen swearing fine-sounding classic oaths—"By the body of Bacchus!" — and, altogether, such a pretty, animated, moving scene, that I quite despair of describing it.

The distant mountain-tops, still white with snow, melted lovingly into the fleecy clouds that broke the empyrean blue of the heavens, leaving one in doubt which was land and which was vapour—lending a visionary and mystic frame to the prospect, and leading the mind away to unreal worlds high up in the distant heavens, or to the voiceless solitudes of primeval forests among the Alban Hills. How

merrily the sun did shine, making all nature glow and palpitate with renewed life at the jocund burst of spring!

This season is the real summer of the Campagna, when the grass is green, the flowers blossoming, and the low trees in the damp dells covered with leaves of a pale, delicate green; for when the great heats come, all is dried up as a very potsherd, partaking of that dark, burning tint that strikes down from heavens of brass in fervent, arid, consuming heat—destructive to every living thing, animate or inanimate.

By-and-by, after much waiting and grumbling, out dashed the horses, with their pink, and red, and yellow riders, scudding across the plain quick as the eye could follow. Up and over they go in a trice; the hurdles are cleared, and then the ditch and the wall, clean and neat—quite beautifully taken! No, there is one brute that *will* lag behind; and see! he won't leap that sham little wall—no, not even though his rider goads him. At length—see! they have all arrived safe and sound; for to be sure they were the very mildest of leaps, and the steeple-chase was surely the most innocent affair in all sporting annals. Fame says a young Frenchman won; and no great glory to him either. But the good horses were English hunters

—*cela se comprend*—so, like dear brethren as we are, the glory of victory was divided!

But now comes the second race—a steeple-chase, too—and even more exciting than the first. All are French officers this time; and see! the same man has won again.

In a moment the pent-up crowd swells over the plain in a moving mass, and we come down and drive up and down on the smooth turf to see the equipages and the people.

There is Torlonia in a high English curricle, with two footmen in royal liveries behind him; and there are Americans, with blue eyes and Turkish beards; and English gentlemen in top-boots, forgetting their *morgue*, and becoming quite excited; and carriages full of smart wives and daughters; and drags with six horses, covered with bells, and fur, and feathers; and Italian gentlemen, very magnificent in gold chains and studs, with wonderful trousers, mounted on miserable hacks: and away we go towards home, into the mystery of dust, flying mountains high before us.

As we linger, one carriage of an impatient disposition breaks through the line, and sets off, dashing, by itself; for which offence it is straightway pounced on by *carabinieri*, who capture and bring it back igno-

miniously, at which the coachman swears, and wishes them *tanti accidenti*—an approved and universal expression of desperate wrath; and somebody else's horses set off quite wildly, ingeniously break the harness, leaving the carriage, full of people, sticking in the ruts, which causes a general laugh.

I looked back, and already the lonely spot I knew so well, cleared of the ephemeral crowd, had returned to its loneliness. The sun was now sinking in purple and gold behind the mountains; long, soft shadows were spreading gradually over the plain; down from the low hills crept the great flocks of sheep, pressing on and on to their old pastures, which the busy world had so lately usurped; the birds circled, and shot on "whirring wing" as before; and the cool evening breeze came laden with the scent of flowers and herbs, the frankincense Nature sends up to God's altar in the sky.

Tired of the dust, the noise, and turmoil of the Carnival, where men and women play at rude romps for a whole week, and do not even put an "antic disposition on" becomingly, I wandered up to the Capitol, and then down the steps on the other side, by the arch of Septimus Severus, to the church of Santa Martina, in a corner of the Forum. The day was cold and chill, but a warm sun fell on the steps leading to the portico of

the church, where lounged all the beggars and idlers of the neighbourhood at full length—a motley assemblage of bronzed, half-naked savages, sullen-eyed and heavy-featured—clad in sheep-skin, the fur turned outwards.

The church of Santa Martina, although one of the oldest martyr-churches of Rome, has been entirely and ruthlessly modernised by Pietro di Cortona, who was so satisfied with his work of destruction that he called it "his daughter." When I say modernised, I mean made to look as lumberly and awkward as St. George's, Hanover Square. In form it is circular, with three principal altars. In a niche stands the original of Canova's "Religion"—a majestic figure richly draped, pointed flames forming a glory round the head. Near by is the picture of an obscure martyr who suffered under an imaginary Roman emperor; some one who had his hands and feet burned off, and was killed, but somehow came to life again, and painted a picture in the Lateran church, dying after all comfortably in his bed.

On the opposite side of the church was a grand "Saviour," by Thorwaldsen, with a most sweet expression, and at the high-altar a beautiful marble effigy of Santa Martina, to whose memory the church was dedicated by Pope Urban VIII. She was a noble Roman virgin,

who, says Butler, "glorified God, suffering many torments and a cruel death for the faith, in the capital city of the world, in the third century." Her statue represents her as reclining in a tomb with her head cut off, and resting in a basin, on a level with the body. Well and delicately as it is executed, such an effigy gives one the horrors. A narrow staircase conducts to the ancient or subterranean church, once on a level with the Forum, of the same size as its modern twin above—deep, lonely vaults, breathing death, blood, and martyrdom. In the circular vestibule are niches with statues of SS. Theodora, Dorothea, Sabina, and Epifania surmounting their tombs. In one of the aisles lies interred Pietro di Cortona, so named from the Etruscan city of that name, crowning with its huge walls one of the heights between Perugia and Arezzo, of which he was a native. (To estimate rightly how he could paint, one must see his admirable altar-piece in the Capuchin church here.) In a space exactly under the grand altar above, and apart from the other monuments, is a shrine, enriched with the costliest marbles, where rest the remains of St. Martina, on the traditionary spot on which her martyrdom occurred. Even magnificent ecclesiastical Rome has nothing to boast more superb than this tomb—embowelled in the earth, and seen but by the curious few, or the truly

devout Catholic, who conscientiously regulates his prayers by the calendar. Rich offerings these, not intended for purposes of vain display, but solely to honour the memory of the virgin-martyr, whose bones are exposed for veneration. Here are the richest bronzes, the most delicately-tinted marbles, positive *blocks* of amethyst and crystal quite amazing to behold, and an "Assumption of the Virgin," more curious than beautiful, of white alabaster, on lapis-lazuli, repeated on either side of the shrine. Within this gorgeous outer casing, enclosed in an elegant casket of rare marble, so transparent that it resembles thick glass, lie the remains of the saint. In a side chapel there is a terra-cotta group of SS. Martina, Concordia, and Epifania, elegant and classical enough to represent the three Graces.

A flight of stairs mounting from the church conducts to the Accademia of San Luca, to which it was attached as a sanctuary. In modern times the name of Carlo Maratti is intimately connected with its increasing celebrity, he having been its president for many years. The present gallery dates back to that period, when, unfortunately, the heavy expenses incurred by its erection obliged him to sell all those portraits of living artists, painted by themselves, which we all have admired at Florence, especially the never-to-be-for-

gotten head of Raphael, so conspicuous an ornament of the fine collection. The gallery was icy cold, and I found the custode endeavouring to warm himself over a miserable *scaldino*. This old fellow was a great character.

"*Evviva,*" said he, starting up as I appeared. "I am delighted to receive madama. Why was she not at the Corso, to see the *furore* of the Carnivale? That was strange, for ladies like fun—*ma, si vede bene*—the signora is a *dilettante*. Ah, *brava!* Now let us view the pictures, *che sono belli, bellissimi.*"

He did not know half the masters, and those he named were wrong; but there was no putting him down.

"This," said he, "is a 'St. Jerome,' by Titian. Ugh! *che colorito, un originale.* This is Fiamingo——"

"Was it Rubens or Vandyke?" This question he pretended not to hear.

"*Si, si—Fiamingo, ecco. Un originale proprio.*"

"What is that head?" said I.

"The Queen of England," replied he.

"Not the present one?"

"No, centuries back;" Elisabetta, he thought, was her name. "*Non è bella,* but she was a fine woman, and diverted herself in her day. *Si è divertita immensamente, ma, poi!* Now the worms would not feed on her. Pah!"

There was an exquisite "Venus," by Titian, very little troubled by drapery, surveying herself in a glass held by Cupid—a charmingly-coloured work, the goddess radiant in the rich type of Venetian beauty.

"*E bella,*" said the old fellow, scratching his head, "*ma un po scoperta*" (rather naked), "*ma! come si fa?* Nature made us all, and Eve wore no petticoats."

A young man, dressed in the romantic-German-artist style, was standing by an easel, bearing a copy of a most splendid "Claude," one of the gems of the gallery.

"*Ecco,*" said he, "*questo signore,* he is come all the way from Genoa to copy our pictures, and it is so cold he can't work to-day."

"*Si, davvero troppo freddo,*" replied the long-legged youth.

"He is the Marchese X——," whispered the old man; "*molto gran' signore, ugh! Nobilissimo,* but he loves the art, *che gli fa onore.*"

"I cannot paint," chimed in the *sans-culotte* marchese, "it is too cold; *diantre! quel froid à cette saison!*"

There is much trash and many fine pictures in this collection, of which Murray says absolutely nothing. There is a splendid Titian, Diana bathing, surrounded by her nymphs, discovering Calisto, a group by no means *convenable* for the goddess of chastity; indeed,

quite fit to figure on the walls of Fontainebleau in the time of Francis I. This picture was presented by a Russian, and when the Czar was in Rome the custode said he came to see it, and was very angry so fine a painting had been sent out of the kingdom. No wonder. It is superbly coloured, and leads one's thoughts away to the bright blue, dancing Adriatic, mirroring the snowy churches like great snow-drifts, within whose pillared sanctuaries such treasure-pictures are stored away. The old man grunted immensely over this picture.

"Ah!" said he at last, "it is dangerous to bathe sometimes—specially in company."

He seemed to have a malicious pleasure in informing me that the most *décolleté* pictures had been the donation of different popes; and as there are many of this description, I really am afraid the associates of San Luca have, notwithstanding their saintly patron, a terrible turn for the world, the flesh, and the devil.

One of the most beautiful *genre* pictures in Rome is here, by Guido Cagnacci, a pupil of Guido Reni's,—Lucretia with Sextus Tarquin holding a dagger over her. Suffice it to say that it is one of those remarkable works that stand out distinct when hundreds of others fade into the mist of memory. Copies of it are multiplied to an incredible extent; but it could not

be hung up in a church, call it by any name you would. The picture tells the story, and tells it all too well.

"Ah!" said the custode, "Lucrezia was a fine woman for Tarquin's son to have lost Rome for her sake."

Sextus's face tells of love, despair, determination, rage, rapture—all mingled together in a wonderful way. Those magic shades must have come from Guido's own pencil. The so-called picture of San Luca, said to be by Raphael—giving its name to the Accademia—is weak, mannered, and utterly deficient in grace. San Luca, seated at an easel, is painting a portrait of the Madonna, who stands pushed *en profil* in a corner, and of so plain and ordinary a *physique* that it is impossible Raphael could ever have imagined such a creature; there is not one characteristic of his style. The painting is on wood, and has been broken in two places. Of this work Kugler says, authoritatively, that the head of San Luca alone is executed by Raphael. When I told the old custode this he became very indignant.

"What can books tell about it?" exclaimed he. "All the world knows it is by Raphael. It used to hang below, in the church, over the altar; *bestie di libri*" (beasts of books). "Don't believe them, signora, I beseech you. They only teach people lies. They know nothing about it!"

There is a large "Venus and Cupid," by Guercino, which the custode introduced to my notice in these words:—

"*Ecco, Venere—con tutte le sue consolazioni!*"

I love Guercino and his inimitable *chiaro-oscuro* and depth of shadow, contrasted and tempered by a peculiar sweetness produced by the happiest combination of colour, though he *did* live in the time of the *Décadence*, and belonged to the Eclectic School.

Here also is Guido's "Fortune rising from the Globe," one of the finest frescoes in Rome—a glorious form, reminding one of the Rospigliosi "Aurora," with full rounded limbs, and matted yellow hair flying in the wind, by which Cupid holds fast as though determined to win and keep her. The *concetto* is most poetical, and the colouring perfect.

I have dwelt longer on this most varied and interesting collection from the fact of its being comparatively little known or appreciated. When I departed, the old custode doffed his weather-beaten hat, and bowing down to the ground, said—

"*Addio, cara signora;* I honour and respect you—*Stia buona bene e felice*—and remember the poor old fellow that keeps the *gloriosi quadri*" (glorious pictures). "Be good, well, and happy."

I wish to note down the traditionary footsteps of St.

Peter and St. Paul at Rome, having visited the various spots connected with their supposed residence here with great interest. I have spoken of my descent into the Mamertine prisons, where for nine months they are said to have lain in close imprisonment. While St. Peter was still unmolested and residing at the house of Prudens—now pointed out as the spot where stands the interesting and most ancient church of Santa Prudenziana, near Santa Maria Maggiore—he again exhibited an example of that weakness of character which led him basely to deny the Divine Lord he loved. A persecution against the Christians was again threatened; he became alarmed for his personal safety, and his friends strongly urged his flight. Peter listened to them, and allowing himself to be influenced by their persuasions, he fled from Rome, passing out of the Porta San Sebastiano, under the massive arch of Drusus, spanning the Appian Way—now called the Street of Tombs.

He proceeded about a mile, to a spot where the road separates, forming a fork, leading in one direction towards the Fountain of Egeria; and by the other to the church of San Sebastiano, built over the most practicable entrance into the catacombs, beside the tomb of Cecilia Metella—one of those many sepulchral monuments that line the Appian Way on either hand, stand-

ing forth sadly and solemnly in the desolate Campagna. St. Peter, says ecclesiastical tradition, had reached this precise spot where the road separates, when he beheld advancing towards him his Divine Master. Astonished at the sight, he exclaimed, "Lord, where goest thou?" (*"Domine quo vadis?"*) To which question the glorified form replied, "I go to Rome, to be again crucified;" and disappeared.

This vision explained to the Apostle what were the intentions of his Divine Master respecting himself, and the meaning of that prophecy—"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou art old thou shalt stretch forth thine hands, and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." He instantly retraced his steps, and returned to Rome, where shortly the deepest dungeons of the Mamertine prisons opened to receive him.

The actual church of *Domine quo Vadis* has nothing but its beautifully suggestive legend to recommend it, otherwise it is a miserable little place; indeed, there is a vulgar, tawdry look about the interior quite painful to the feelings of those who arrive glowing with enthusiasm, and eager to behold the scene of one, if not the most touching, of the Church's early legends. A stone, bearing the impress of what is said to have been

the Divine foot, but which measures some thirty inches at least in length, and is singularly "out of drawing" in every way, stands just at the entrance to the nave.

When the Apostles quitted the Mamertine prisons, tradition leads them to the Ostian Way, where they were separated previous to undergoing martyrdom. A stone marks the spot, engraven with their parting words: "Peace be with thee, thou founder of the Church"—(St. Paul is supposed to say to St. Peter)—"thou shepherd of the universal flock of Jesus Christ." To which St. Peter replied, "God be with thee, thou mighty preacher, who guidest the just in the living way." St. Paul was then led on to a deserted plain three miles from the city, to which I shall return, first following the footsteps of St. Peter through the busy streets, and over the Tiber, to the steep heights of the Janiculum, where, in sight of great pagan Rome, spread out as a map at his feet, he suffered crucifixion —begging of his executioners to be reversed on the cruel tree, as a last and crowning act of humiliation, declaring himself unworthy to die in the same upright attitude as his Divine Master.

Where he expired, and on the spot where the cross was erected, now stands the church of San Pietro in Montorio. It was selected by Rome's republican defenders as a barrack—an impious and ill-imagined

idea, showing how little Papal teaching for the last eighteen centuries had profited the lower population of its own capital. The balls rained like an iron hail-storm on the venerable edifice, enriched and adorned by the munificence of various sovereigns. All the sight-seeing world go there to examine the painting by Sebastian del Piombo of Christ's flagellation —a work, I confess, to my judgment, dark, unintelligible, and unpleasing; a bad imitation of Michel Angelo, who needed all his individual genius and grandeur to make his contortions bearable. No imitation of his style can ever succeed.

Other reflections and recollections than those of art filled my mind as I sat under the shadow of the solemn pillars of the church of Montorio; and I thought of much in which, perhaps, but few would sympathise. My thoughts travelled far into other ages and distant times, when the great temple of Jupiter crowned the Capitoline Hill, and the altars smoked with sacrifices to false gods, while persecuted Christians burrowed in dark passages of tortuous catacombs like the frighted hare fleeing from her cruel pursuers. In the cloister, whither we were led by a kind, smiling monk, is a beautiful circular church—a bijou of the Renaissance (very like in form that introduced by Raphael in the background of his cartoon of St. Paul preaching at

Athens), erected by Bramante over the exact spot marked by tradition as that where St. Peter was crucified.

"*E proprio un miracolo,*" said the monk, "that this church escaped, when the walls around it were battered to the ground? *Si vede che qui sta il santo.* He protected it."

And truly it did seem little short of a manifest miracle that it had escaped the destruction which reduced half the larger church to a ruin. There it stands, however, uninjured and intact, as if war had never raised its exterminating arm against it. It is divided into an upper and lower church. In the latter is shown the aperture where the cross was fixed on which St. Peter suffered with his head downwards; thus nobly vindicating, at the last moment, his love and devotion to the Saviour he had once denied. A lamp burns before the aperture. The monk put down a long reed and brought up some of the golden sand from below, presenting it to us as *una cosa di devozione.* The soil of the hill is in this part entirely of sand of a particularly bright tint—hence the name of the church, "Montorio"—or of the *golden mount.*

I must now take up the traditionary footsteps of St. Paul from the same point as those of St. Peter, namely, before his entrance into the Mamertine prisons. On first arriving in the Eternal City, St. Paul remained

for two years unmolested by the breath of persecution. During that period he resided in a house situated where now stands the church of Santa Maria, in Via Lata, next door to the sumptuous palace of the Dorias, now the most crowded and busy part of the Corso. During this time he was only guarded by one soldier, and from this retirement he addressed his Epistle to the Hebrews, and preached continually to all within his reach, Jews as well as Gentiles. St. Luke is said to have borne him company, and under his dictation to have written the Acts of the Apostles.

The present church is devoid of all save traditionary interest. But there is a subterranean chapel, containing three rooms (then on a level with the city), which he is said to have inhabited, with ancient and curious arched roofs, formed of great massive stones rudely placed together, in the same manner as the blocks forming the Mamertine prisons. Here, too, is also shown a well, said to have sprung up miraculously, in order that he might baptize those converted by his inspired preaching.

After the imprisonment of St. Paul and his separation from St. Peter, he was led on about three miles from Rome—on the Ostian Way—to a desolate place in the Campagna, where he was beheaded. Tradition asserts that his head, separated from the body, bounded

three times from the violence of the blow, and that at each spot where it touched the ground a spring gushed forth. To commemorate this miracle a church was built at a very early period, and called San Paolo alle trè Fontane. I am always anxious to survey every place sanctified by tradition, however uncertain. It gives a local colouring and vitality to recollections beyond the perusal of a thousand books—making the events recorded, be they historical or religious, in a manner one's own. I therefore set forth, through the gate leading to the great basilica of San Paolo, on my pilgrimage.

After passing the huge church, we turned off from the great Ostian road a little to the left, up a steep ascent. Arrived at the summit, a beautiful though desolate view opened before us. Around, the low grassy undulations of the Campagna, now of a refreshing green, sloped down gradually towards a central valley or amphitheatre, where uprose three large churches, without a single tree or cottage within sight over the vast range our eye embraced. A strange and solemn sight are these solitary sanctuaries in the midst of that lonely plain. To our left lay a winding valley, stretching away for miles through gentle undulating hills, whose soft and delicate outlines assimilated well with the delicate tint of the fresh

herbage mantling their sides. No sound broke the silence. Mountains in the distance of a rich purple tint, the blue sky above, and the green earth beneath, mingled in a broad harmonious colouring. I descended towards the churches which people this wilderness with such a crowd of grand and affecting recollections. They lie under the shadow of a low hill, nestling round a ruined building, once a convent occupied by the monks of St. Bernard, but now a ruin, malaria having driven away its inhabitants. It appears to be used as a farm-house, for troops of chickens and ducks woke the echoes of the once spacious *cortile*. As we approached the first church, that of Santa Maria della Scala Santa, a ragged, barefooted monk approached, pale and wan in appearance, and offered to conduct us. He was the last of the brethren who had dared to linger there. Within the Gothic church, consisting of a long central nave, bordered by low, rounded arches, he pointed out frescoes of prophets and saints, said to have been originally painted by Raphael; but they are now so entirely retouched and over-painted as only to display grand and striking outlines.

The tribune is decorated with a picture representing the vision of St. Bernard, who, it is said, one day celebrating mass on this altar for the dead, saw in an ecstasy a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, by

which the angels were conducting souls delivered by his prayers from purgatory into paradise.

There is a second large and handsome church, with a dome, forming a conspicuous object from the surrounding Campagna, dedicated to St. Anastasia; but I hastened on, by a narrow path, led by the wretched monk, towards the Church of the Three Fountains. I was vexed to find an edifice painfully modernised, and yet again falling into a ruin devoid of all dignity. It is long and narrow, undivided by aisles. The pillar is shown to which the Apostle was bound, and down the side of the outer wall appear three apertures enclosed in marble, surmounted by a sculptured image of his decapitated head, where the purest and coldest waters flow. I did not visit the spot in the spirit of criticism or of levity, therefore I am in no mood to consider what objections may be urged against this beautiful and touching tradition, which lends so profound an interest to the wild scene around.

* * * * *

Hurrah for the breezy, fresh Campagna, sweetly scented with wild thyme, where the Mediterranean gales rendezvous for sport, and play with the blasts sweeping down from Monte Cavo and the snow-capped Sabine Hills! Hurrah for the bright sun lighting up the low copses fringing the deep valleys, where grow

the freshest grass and moss, and the fairest flowers of the spring! And, last of all, hurrah for the hunt and the pink coats, and the splendid horses, and the dogs with their stiff tails!—for there really is an English hunt at Rome, and I have seen it, and have been driving about in its wake for four mortal hours.

Now I will tell you all about it. English are English all the world over; especially so at Rome, where they assemble in such multitudes, they are apt to forget the existence of the Pope and the Romans altogether, and fancy that the city of the Cæsars has become a British colony. Wherever they go—our delightful countrymen—they take their manners like their clothes, carefully packed up, and preserved quite unaltered or improved; and they drink their burning wines in tropical heats, and import "papers," which they read all day seated in stifling rooms in glorious weather, and cultivate their *morgue* and pride, and their long purses, their unquenchable curiosity, their iron prejudices on all subjects, and their utter inability to speak any tongue but their own; and, last of all, they take their horses, and their dogs, and their grooms, and the whole paraphernalia of their hunt. Although I am a born Englishwoman, I never knew to what a singularly remarkable and obstinate nation I belonged until I came into Italy. A wonderfully national nation are

we, and therefore it is quite astonishing why people so satisfied and delighted with their own habits and customs should ever leave that all-perfect country they will insist on forcing everywhere.

But I have done—leaving the sturdy English squires with their ill-dressed wives and daughters to strut about the Piazza di Spagna, peering into the shops of ready-witted Italians, who, calculating on their folly and ignorance, levy a heavy black-mail in the way of dollars; or to parade up and down the Pincian with their *noli me tangere* look, so becoming in fellow-sinners and Christian brethren—I will go off and away up the long hill, winding round the sides of Monte Mario, crested by the Villa Mellini, and its groves of cypress, and dark ilex, and pine—a very diadem of beauty—with the olive gardens nestling in the warm folds of the hillsides; and on and on by a long road, very dusty and very dull, until we reach a great green plain covered with grass, quite boundless to the eye—green below and blue above—nought save those two colours of primeval nature, the open Campagna.

Here, close by the road, which now becomes a grassy track, is a striped booth erected, fixed on one side to a large van, just like a show-caravan at a country fair; and round the little booth, which looks very solitary and odd, stuck up alone in that awful plain, are

grouped beautiful hunters, sleek and satin-coated, pawing the ground, while others, with proud curved necks and flashing eyes, are galloping here and there with their masters on their backs. Some are ridden by fat, oily English grooms, dressed quite *cap-à-pie*, talking cockney as they congregate together. Red coat after red coat trots up, and carriage after carriage full of pretty ladies, but quite properly and sufficiently distant in their looks to make it certain that they are English bred and born; and then last of all come the two whippers-in and dogs, nice sagacious creatures, which quietly lie down to rest and husband their strength until the right moment comes—and then we shall see. The wind blows fresh from the glorious mountains skirting that boundless 'plain, and one begins to wish the red coats would leave off hanging over the carriages and entertaining the *belles* within—because it is growing cold—when, just at the right moment, we are off. On go the dogs, and the horses and riders, and a little man on a rough pony, with a hatchet to *cut through the hedges* (hear this, O ye of Melton Mowbray and the Warwick Hunt!), because the infant hunt is too weak to leap much; and after come the carriages in a long file, driving out, as it were, to sea on the trackless waves of that placid ocean of grass. There was no road, and we bumped up and

down on the inequalities of the grass in a most comical fashion. The hunt crept slowly on seeking for a fox they could not find. On they went, forming the prettiest tableaux imaginable, down into narrow valleys, damp and dewy and emerald green, their sides clothed with low-tufted woods and luxuriant sedges—now hiding, now displaying the persevering red coats—standing some above, on the brow of the little rising hills; others below, winding in the sinuosities of the glades far onwards. Now and then some fair equestrian (among whom a lovely Prussian bride in the first blush of youth and beauty, riding a magnificent horse which she managed with perfect skill, appeared pre-eminent) grew impatient, and took a hasty hand-gallop straight on end.

We in the carriages quietly followed the noiseless search after a fox that would *not* be found, and, mile after mile, crept on up little rises, and down into gentle dales, in the most singular drive I ever took in all my life. Every now and then I thought we must be overturned; but not a bit of it. One carriage ventured, and the rest followed like a flock of obedient sheep. The breezes, fragrant with the rich odour of herbs and flowers, swept softly around; broad shadows formed gigantic shapes on the grass; flocks of small birds rose, and dispersed at our approach; and the

sallow, skin-clad *pastori*, mounted on shaggy ponies, or leaning on long staffs, came forth to stare at the *élite* of the great city below.

The scene, though moving, was silent; voices were lost on that great hunting-ground; the valleys still bent onwards, and led us enticingly away, away, far out into an unreal and dreamy world. By this time I had almost forgotten why we were there, and neither cared for nor heeded what was passing around. I desired to return, and so we hoisted sail and steered towards the huge dome rising so strangely out of nothing, like a great balloon sailing in a firmament of green. As we proceeded, the sheep in their folds started up and stared at the unusual invasion, and the *pastori* rested on their poles, gazing sadly upon us. Had it not been for them we never should have landed on the road.

When I look back on those hours spent on the boundless Campagna prairie, it comes before me like a vision, and the hunt and the silent procession like phantasmagoria, perfect and beautiful, but shadowy, soulless, and unreal—forms conjured up from the deep recesses of those enchanted valleys to lead one on, ever wandering, like the vague and endless strivings of a dream. I went out into that spell-bound universe of green, believing all I saw there to be creatures of flesh

and blood, but now I have returned I doubt their identity, especially that of the wild huntsmen that went and came in the dark ilex groves, and the fox that never was found.

We returned as the sun was setting, and I am much inclined to believe those spirits melted away and vanished in the long shadows of coming night, and that ourselves were the only beings who returned to the great city.

When the Holy Father Sixtus, the second of that name, pope and martyr, was dragged to the stake by command of the Emperor Valerian, a young priest, of gentle and engaging aspect, followed him, and thus addressed him :—

"Father, whither are you going without your son and your deacon? Never before were you wont to offer sacrifice without me. Have I been wanting in my duty? Have I displeased you? Try me, and see if I am not capable of enduring torments, fire, or imprisonment, for the blood of our Lord."

"I do not leave you, my son," replied the venerable pontiff, moved at the youth's generous impatience for the rack and the flames of martyrdom; "my spirit shall watch over *you*, who are reserved for a greater and more glorious trial than is vouchsafed to *me*. In three days we shall meet in heaven!"

Then the young priest rejoiced to hear that he should be so soon with God, and, like a traveller disposing himself for a long journey, prepared all his worldly affairs, distributed his scanty means to the Christian poor, who bathed with their tears the deep-hidden altars in the mysterious catacombs, where the holy sacrifice was offered. He also gave somewhat of the Church's slender treasury. His proceedings were not so well hidden but that the Roman prefect got word of them, and, in high rage, sent for the young priest, and desired to be shown his hidden treasures.

"Bring to light," cried he, "those vessels of gold and candlesticks of silver you possess. They are wanted for the altars of the gods. Render also to Cæsar the things which are his; he needs the coin for the maintenance of his armies. Your God certainly coined no money on earth, and needs none now He is dead. Words alone were his revenues; keep thou them, and give the gold to Imperial Cæsar."

The young priest, nothing daunted, replied:—

"You say truth; the Church indeed is rich in inestimable treasure. I will make out instantly an inventory, and display to you all our possessions."

Then the young priest went round to all the holes and corners of the city: he sought in the sand-pits of the Esquiline (where herded the slaves who were

branded, and the vile murderers escaped from justice) for the persecuted Christians, who were happy if there they might burrow like beasts, so that they had but peace. He went into foul holes and noisome courts—to the close-packed houses under the Tarpeian Rock —to the poor huts beyond the Quintilian meadows—and he assembled at length all the Christian poor—maimed, deaf, and blind—in a certain spot on the Cœlian Hill, together with the lepers, and the poor virgins, and orphans, and widows. He then went to the prefect, and told him to come, for the treasure was spread forth.

When the luxurious prefect, fresh from the scented waters of the marble baths, came among such a loathsome throng, he gathered up the folds of his toga, and burst forth in a great rage:—

"By the eternal Jove! I will teach you to play such tricks as these! How dare you, base slave and caitiff Christian, to bandy pleasantries with me? What means this abject crowd?"

"Why are you displeased?" rejoined the young priest, calm and unmoved by his rage. "It is gold that is low, vile, and mean, and incites men to violence. We have none, we despise it. You asked for the treasure of the Christian Church—lo! it is before you—the sick, the weak, the wretched, they are Christ's jewels, and with them He makes up his crown! I have none other."

Then the prefect grew more furious.

"Do you presume to mock me?" cried he. "Have the axes, and the fasces, and the sacred eagles no power? In your vanity and your folly you desire to die the same vile death as Jesus; but new tortures yet unheard shall be invented—death shall become to you the sweetest boon."

Then the prefect commanded his lictors to make ready a great gridiron, and to cast under it live coals nearly extinguished, that they might slowly burn; and Lawrence—for he was the courageous young priest—was stripped, and bound, and extended on the gridiron, until his flesh was slowly burnt off his bones; he all the while continuing in earnest prayer, and imploring the Divine mercy on his native Rome, and that, for the sake of his sufferings, the Christian faith might be planted there. So he died; and his remains were carried without the city to the Veran field, beside the road leading to Tibur.

In after years, when Constantine the emperor had seen the glorious cross hanging in the blue sky over the Monte Mario, where he lay encamped against Maxentius, and had been converted, and had proclaimed Christianity the religion of the universe in the great hall of the Ulpian Basilica, he bethought him of this glorious martyr, and built a church over his tomb.

Here, too, were afterwards brought the remains of the protomartyr Stephen; and Constantine named the church one of the seven basilicas of Christian Rome. It is this church, heavy with pious legends, that I have visited this day.

I quitted the city by the Porta San Lorenzo, anciently called Tiburtina, with its two antique towers, twin sisters of decay, and its long links of aqueducts stretching far away into the plain. About a mile distant, on a dusty road now leading to modern Tivoli, the basilica appears rising out of solitary fields; yet the general aspect of the building is pleasing, from a certain quaint, old-fashioned look suggestive of the graceful legends with which it is associated.

The portico, running the entire length of the front, might, except for the six Ionic columns—pilfered from some pagan temple—serve as the entrance to a large barn. Bare wooden rafters support it; and the walls are covered with fiery frescoes, most grotesque in character, quite smelling of brimstone and an unutterable place below. These atrocities are said to have been executed in the time of Pope Honorius III. I need not add that art was then almost at its dying gasp, weighed down under the influence of the dark ages. Here is the soul of St. Lawrence, represented as weighed on a balance by black fiends; the corona-

tion of Peter Courtenay, as Emperor of the East, which took place in this basilica; dead men raised to life; souls rescued from purgatory by the Pope flying up to heaven—all wild, indescribable scenes, and represented in the stiffest forms of Byzantine pattern; the frescoes divided from each other by borders of black or orange, and mounting tier above tier to the cornice.

The interior is of majestic and imposing proportions, every way worthy of the proud name of Basilica; but, nevertheless, there is an unfinished, bare look about it, in spite of much magnificent decoration. The nave is supported by Ionic columns of classical workmanship, but the entablature is only whitewash, while the old wooden ceiling, carved in high relief, is infinitely rich, and coloured of a pale blue. The floor is *opus Alexandrinum*. The two ambones, or marble pulpits, from which were read the Gospel and the Epistle, have been spared, and are of rare beauty, ornamented with large slabs of rich red and green marbles, with mosaic borders of even more precious materials. The whole of the apsis, or tribune, considerably raised by marble steps, is solemn and imposing, supported by twelve magnificent pavonazzetto columns, all, save two, decorated with graceful Corinthian capitals. Unfortunately they are half sunk

to accommodate the elevation of the tribune; their proportions can, therefore, only be judged of from below. Above is an arched gallery, supported by smaller columns. This forest-like mass of pillars, arches, and capitals, all of exquisite workmanship, produces a fine effect. Old frescoes ornament the vault of the tribune, mosaics decorate the arch. Under the high-altar is a subterranean chamber, or "confession," visible from above, where lie enshrined the bones of St. Stephen and St. Lawrence. These remains are approached by Catholics with extreme awe, for, when restorations were going on in the church, in the reign of Pelagius II., the marble sepulchres being opened, and the bones irreverently touched, all present died within ten days.

As I stood leaning against a pillar on the high-altar, I could not but feel penetrated by the devotional solitude and singularity of the scene—the heavy damps of ages, the solemn traditions of the martyred dead breathed from these stern old walls. Not a sound was heard from the outward world; through a side-door the sun streamed in from the spacious cloister, surrounded by columned arcades—all solitary, silent, forsaken.

I had had a fancy to visit the shrine, from a most singular tradition attached to it. In the reign of Pope

Alexander II., about the time that the Normans invaded England, there lived in the convent a pious monk, who was so fervent in prayer that he invariably rose before daybreak to invoke the intercession of the holy martyrs, whose remains lie under the altar.

Once — it was a Wednesday in August — while kneeling there, he saw, with his open eyes, just as the daylight began to glimmer, the great doors open as of themselves, and a stately man, with a long beard, enter, habited for the performance of mass, accompanied by a deacon of a youthful and pleasant aspect, followed by a crowd of many soldiers, monks, and nobles, all in strange attire. Although a numerous retinue, their footsteps raised no echo—the church was as quiet as when the monk prayed alone. Astonished at the strange sight, he rose from his knees trembling, and as the procession silently advanced up the nave, he hid himself behind the pillars and watched. As they approached the high-altar the monk softly approached the young priest (for his mind misgave him, and he was very curious, though sorely frightened), and, with much respect, whispered to him in these words:—

"I pray you tell me who are you that prepare with such solemnity for the morning mass?"

The youth with the pleasant aspect replied:—

"The one habited as a priest is St. Peter. I am Lawrence. On the anniversary of the day when our blessed Lord was betrayed by the wicked Judas's kiss, and when the judges appointed that he should expire by the slow torture of the accursed tree, I also suffered martyrdom for his love; therefore, in memory of that day, we are come to celebrate the solemnity in this church built over my bones. St. Stephen is also among this blessed company; the ministers are angels of paradise; and the others are apostles, martyrs, and confessors, who have all sealed their faith with their blood. They have had in remembrance the day of my death, and because it should be known of all and honoured to the glory of our Lord in the universal church, I have desired that you should see us with your mortal eyes, that you may make manifest this solemnity to all men. I therefore command you, when day breaks, go to the Pope, and tell him from me to come here quickly with all his clergy, and to offer up the blessed sacrifice for the people."

"But," returned the monk, now pale with awe and fright, as he saw the visionary multitude gathering round him, and felt the icy chill of their garments, "but how shall I, a poor monk, make the Pope believe my words if I have no sign of the holy vision?"

Then the young saint took off the cincture with

which he was girded, and gave it to the monk, to show in token of all he had seen. Then the monk, being full of fear, returned to the monastery, and, as the day was now broke, assembled the monks, told them of the vision, and showed them the cincture. Then all, knowing the holiness of the monk, believed his words, and went with him to the Pope, who then dwelt at the Lateran Palace, on the Cœlian Hill, and he, after assembling the conclave of cardinals by their council, returned to celebrate the mass.

It so chanced that as they went forth they met a dead man who was being carried to the grave; so, to prove the virtue of the cincture, having prayed, the Pope placed it on the corpse, which at once moved and came to life, at which miracle they gave great thanks to God and the holy St. Lawrence, and the Pope celebrated solemn mass at the church, which is repeated every year. This, therefore, causes much fervour to St. Lawrence, and induces crowds to go on a certain Wednesday in August to venerate his remains. It was ever afterwards considered a laudable work of penance to pass the night in prayer before the high-altar. When Charles IV., with his wife, was crowned at Rome by the Cardinal Bertrando (Pope Innocent IV. being absent at Avignon), the new emperor passed the entire night prostrate in prayer there, and also offered up his

devotions on the stone whereon the body of St. Lawrence was laid after he was dead.

On one side of the altar a flight of steps descends to a dark door in the wall, all green and musty with age, leading into the catacombs of St. Cyriaca, where the body of St. Lawrence was first interred. St. Cyriaca was a pious convert to the Christian faith, and when the saint was burned, she consecrated this land beyond the city, called the Field of Veran, for his sepulchre. Other saints and confessors were laid beside him in long subterranean galleries cut out of the porous tufa-stone; so the catacomb was gradually formed. St. Cyriaca had long devoted herself and her goods to the Saviour.

It was before her house, situated on the Cœlian Hill, hard by the church of the Navicella, that St. Lawrence had assembled the poor, and lame, and blind, and distributed to them alms the day before his death, and in the face of persecution she remained faithful. At length the Emperor Valerian, spite of her high birth and great age, commanded that she should be tortured, because she refused to sacrifice to Jupiter. Her body was torn, and her bones broken with heavy whips of iron and lead. So she died, and was carried out and buried in these catacombs under the church of San Lorenzo, which are still decorated with many interest-

ing and curious frescoes breathing the pious hopes and humble resignation of the early Christians.

Beyond the church of San Sebastiano, the Appian Way extends in a straight line to the tomb of Cecilia Metella, about a quarter of a mile distant, which stands crowning a rugged eminence, "firm as a fortress with its fence of stone." Turning to the left, in a large park-like expanse of the finest turf, one of the rarest prospects of old Rome opens before one. It is enchanting! How shall I describe it? I will try.

At my feet lies a mass of majestic ruins, at first confused and undefined, but by-and-by the long lines of walls, the turrets, and porticoes range themselves into symmetry and order, as under the touch of a fairy's wand, and I see the great circus of Romulus stretching in two long parallel lines before me to the length of 892 feet, a mighty enclosure, narrow in breadth, with turreted towers at the extremity near which I stand. Beyond are the walls of another square enclosure, supposed to be the stables of a riding-school connected with the circus, and to have been adorned with a temple. There are the marks of ranges of arches still engraven on the great outer walls, which alone remain.

Above, the ground rises in a gentle swell, covered with vines and pale mystic olive-trees, perhaps the most appropriate shade Nature ever devised to over-

shadow the ruins of the past. On the edge of the hill stands the church of San Sebastiano, rising out of a dark cypress grove, while among the olive-grounds appear no less than three separate temples and porticoes. I know of no scene in or near Rome so satisfying to the mind as this little-frequented spot, where so much remains to tell of the grandeur of ancient Rome.

Following the line of the hill, beyond the olives and their accompanying vineyards, comes a soft picturesque plantation of feathery elms, standing alone on the great background of the open Campagna, undulating here in endless inequalities of rounded hills and gently-sloping valleys, spanned by the majestic line of the Claudian aqueduct, marching, as it were, in an ever-advancing procession towards the Eternal City.

Above rise pale outlines of mountains and the rounded summits of the Sabine and Alban Hills, now, as the sun is sinking resplendent with delicate shades of pale pink and purple, melting into the blue vault of heaven in charming gradations of colour. Here and there a white mass—Frascati or Tivoli, or the great convent, once the temple of Jupiter Latialis, on the summit of Monte Cavo—catches the lateral rays of the sinking sun, and shines out in dazzling whiteness. There is not a sound to break the harmonious beauty of this lovely scene.

I wandered on over the smooth green sward to rising hillocks opposite, on a level with the great round tomb of Cecilia Metella. Here Rome itself burst on my sight, with its walls and domes, turrets and spires, never more beautiful than when seen from this side, softened by foreground and foliage, and backed by the wooded slopes of Monte Mario and the steep Janiculum.

Around me fed an immense flock of sheep, spreading themselves over the classic meadow; a herd-boy, with the brigand-pointed hat and gay-coloured girdle peculiar to Romagna, sat upon a stone and watched the sheep and me. The vast mausoleum frowned down on me, flanked by its turreted walls, erected by the Gaetani in the middle ages, when this solid structure was transformed into a fortress by the family of the ambitious Pope Boniface. These walls have in their turn become ruins, adding to, rather than detracting from, the dignity of the tomb they enshrined, standing

> "With half its battlements, alone,
> And with two thousand years of ivy grown,
> The garland of eternity."

I suppose no one ever—

> "In contemplative musings wrapt"—

visited this monument without mental questionings in some sort similar to those so gracefully expressed by Byron—to end; as did his, in this simple fact—

"That Metella died.
The wealthiest Roman's wife:
Behold his love or pride!

The ivy and trailing plants that now diadem the summit of this magnificent monument were fanned by the soft evening breeze. No sound was there to awake the remarkable echo which accurately repeats all sounds intrusted to it, so that when Crassus mourned the loss of "that lady of the dead," the funeral solemnities must have been infinitely multiplied by endless repetitions of the wailings of the mourners, as if the infernal gods themselves and all the souls in the nether Hades had united in one vast chorus of groans and cries to bewail the deceased Cecilia. It seems strange that after the lapse of so many ages, the same echo which repeated the lamentations for the wife of the Roman senator, "so honoured and conspicuous," should remain to serve with "damnable iteration" the impatience of every cockney visitor. That echo, too, must have borne many a rough message in the mediæval days when this tomb-fortress was besieged by the Connétable de Bourbon, who opened his trenches before the Aurelian wall and the Street of Tombs as remorselessly as though these venerable remains boasted not a single recollection. Fortunately for me, the present was tranquil as the past; silence

reigned supreme. Pan and the sylvan fauns and wood-nymphs, who must still guard these lovely spots, where was once their home, alone peopled my solitude.

I next descended into the arena of the circus of Romulus immediately beneath, through one of the ruined towers flanking its extremity. The interior, carpeted with brightest grass, is luxuriant in vegetation; whole gardens of variegated flowers, the wallflower, ivy, and low plants of ilex tufted the ruined walls, clothing their nakedness with the rich colouring of returning spring. A peasant was gathering fennel, and immediately approached, begging me, for the love of Heaven "*per le lagrime della Madonna*," to assist him, and pointing to the scanty herbs which he had so carefully collected, in order to make into *minestra*, or broth; "for," said he, "we are starving in the city, and I am come out here to gather a few herbs, to us most precious."

It is from the well-defined remains of this circus, so much more perfect than any similar structure, that antiquarians collect their actual knowledge of the arrangements. It was first supposed to be the circus of Caracalla, and is so named by the accurate Eustace; but later excavations carried on by the Duke Bracciano, brother of Torlonia, to whom the ground belongs, prove from inscriptions that it was erected to Romulus, the son of Maxentius, A.D. 311. From its admirable

preservation, extreme beauty of position, and the poetry and interest of the ruins around it, this circus may be considered as unique among the remains of ancient Rome. The external walls are almost unbroken; in many places the vault supporting the seats still remains; the foundations of the two obelisks, terminating either extremity of the spina (running lengthwise through the circus, and forming the goals), still exist; and on one side stands a sort of tower where the judges sat. Near where I entered is a gallery, which contained a band of musicians, flanked by the towers I have mentioned, whence the signal for starting was given.

There were seven ranges of seats, containing upwards of twenty thousand spectators, and the extreme length of the circus was 1,006 feet. The chariots passed round the spina, and the most fearful accidents constantly occurred from the rapid driving, the narrowness of the space, and the jostling permitted; as also from the fact of the reins being fastened round the bodies of the charioteers. A large gate is found near the spot where they started, used only for the removal of the bodies of those killed in these encounters, as the ancients deemed it a most portentous omen to pass a gate defiled by the passage of a dead body.

I studied the place till my imagination built up the

ruins and filled the vast arena with spectators. I fancied the solemn procession advancing before the commencement of the games, headed by the emperor, seated on a superb car. Troops of young boys follow, and escort the charioteers driving the chariots destined for the race, some harnessed with two, some with four, and even six horses. Then come the athletes, almost naked, followed by troops of dancers, consisting of men, youths, and children, habited in scarlet tunics, and wearing a short sword and a helmet ornamented with feathers. They execute war-dances as they advance to the sound of flutes, and harps of ivory, and lutes. Hideous satyrs covered with the skins of animals, overgrown Silenuses, with all kinds of monsters in strange travesties, imitate with various contortions the more dignified dancers who precede them, seeking to divert the spectators by their extravagance.

Then appear a troop of priests, bearing in their hands vessels of gold and silver containing incense, perfuming the air as they advance. Their approach is heralded by a band of music. Others bear the statues of the gods, who in honour of the occasion condescend to leave their temples. Some deities are borne in splendid cars enriched with precious stones; others, too sacred for the eyes of the *profanum vulgus*, are enshrouded in close litters; they are escorted by the patricians, and nobly-

born children are proud to hold the bridle of the superb horses that draw them. The procession makes the circuit of the assembly, and is received with general acclamations, especially on the appearance of any idol particularly venerated by the credulous plebs. The statues are then placed in a temple on cushions of the richest materials. The emperor, descending from his chariot, pours out libations—the earthly Jupiter to his heavenly brother. The games are then proclaimed, and the chariots of green, blue, white, and red emerge from the *carceri* and rush on their furious course, as a white cloth, thrown from the imperial gallery, gives the signal to begin.

There is a melancholy charm, a silent though eloquent language of the past, interwoven with these ruins (now warmed and tinged by the bright sun into a ruddy brown), inexpressibly enticing. It is a sheltered, sequestered spot to while away the twilight hours, on the soft banks of grass under the shadow of the high walls, and surrender oneself up to fast-flitting fancies. Light came over my soul and happiness. I had longed to behold the classic remains of Rome, and behold, coming from the far misty North, I was among them! I seated myself on the capital of a fallen pillar, and gazed on the ruins, the long grass, and waving reeds. The arches, the pillars, the towers, the ruined

temples peeping out of the olive wood on the hill above, all spoke out plainly their sepulchral language; and the dark cypresses beside the catacomb church whispered also as the breeze moaned through their heavy branches.

I at length reluctantly withdrew, passing under the triumphal arch at the opposite extremity of the circus through which the victorious charioteers drove amidst the shouts and acclamations of the multitude. That ruined arch now abuts on a road leading to Albano, which I crossed on my way to the Fountain of Egeria; but time would not permit me, on that occasion, to proceed farther.

X.

The Carnival—The Valley and Fountain of Egeria—Society and the Artist World.

I LOVE the Eternal City, after my fashion, with a devotion as unquestioning and entire as ever animated the bosom of an ancient Roman; but I am bound to confess that there is one period when Rome is most unacceptable—during the Carnival. A perfectly contagious plague of folly, vulgarity, license, noise, and ribaldry is abroad, and I would desire to retire from all possible contact with the incongruous scene. Solemn, grave, meditative Rome, with its dim memories looming through the chasm of bygone ages, its frowning palaces, its deeply-shadowed cavernous streets, its classical population (wanting only the toga to make proper senators with such chiselled features and majestic forms), its religious displays, pious associations, popes, cardinals, churches, ruins, relics, palaces, sculptures, and mosaics, given up for ten days to vulgar commonplace tomfoolery! Oh, horrible! May I never see "the Niobe of nations" so debase

herself again! It was to me the most profoundly melancholy period of my stay, and I only went into the Corso to be able, from actual seeing, the more heartily to abuse the degrading scenes there enacted.

Elsewhere the Carnival may be very amusing in picturesque bright Italy, where the very beggars wear their gaudy rags with a kind of royal dignity, but it is utterly unsuitable to the grandeur of the Eternal City, and ought to be discontinued by general acclamation. If the Carnival, and the English, and the Codini were banished from Rome, there would remain nothing "to fright it from its propriety." The Carnival of the present century is thoroughly bereft of all mediæval picturesqueness and poetry since masks* were forbidden, and the half-barbarous but dramatic scene at the Capitol is suppressed, when the aged Jews came in procession from the Ghetto, and kneeling bare-headed before the senator, entreated to be allowed to remain "*one year* longer in Rome," on condition of paying the expenses of the festival, furnishing the banners, and supplying the prize-money, the senator in gracious assent placing his foot on the prostrate Israelite, while the great bell of the Capitol rang out its brazen notes.

During the latter days of the Carnival, from two till six, all the world rushes madly to the Corso, now

* They are this year (1871) again permitted.

fluttering with flags, tapestry, and banners, while red and white hangings picturesquely drape the galleries, terraces, cornices, and windows of the stern old palaces "of other days," until their familiar faces become quite unrecognisable; for though masks were denied to the people, the houses certainly were allowed to adopt them. People are crushed into carriages and cars by dozens; streets overflow; the windows are crammed; the galleries and verandahs tremble with the weight; the dust flies like sand on the desert; the sun shines too hot; the wind blows too chill; and after all this *chiasso*, "what come they out for to see?" A few dozen miserable ragamuffins of the lowest grade in dirty costumes hired in miserable slop-shops (for none but the lowest ever dream of a regular costume)—crowds of the refuse of a great city—troops of half-tipsy and much-excited soldiers—gentlemen with a charming return to infantine simplicity, dressed in "over-all" pinafores of brown holland; and ladies wearing blue wire masks, which make them look particularly hideous. Then one is pelted with flowers so black and dirty that they seem the very corpses of themselves. Blinded with showers of lime (the *gesso* of the studios put to such unholy abuses!) which every rascal may freely fling in one's face, and which descends also in deluges from above, making one's eyes

intolerable for days (mine positively ache to write of it), screamed at, sworn at, stared at, by a vast crowd, where one recognises not a soul, so muffled up is every one in the aforesaid wire masks, veils, and great hats of the conspirator cut—all this martyrdom being occasionally rewarded by a tiny bag of sugar-plums thrown by a compassionate male friend, or a bouquet of decent flowers, which is either lost in the street, or the next instant torn violently from one's grasp by a vile little street urchin, who makes a few *bajocchi* by its speedy sale!

The enormities committed by the ladies and gentlemen placed in the galleries are utterly outrageous and unaccountable; it is a serious, solemn system of folly unrelieved by any excuse of fun or frolic—a so-styled farce, without laugh or jest. English, and Germans, and Americans there take their stand with all the grave reserve of the sober nations of the North, and, from buckets filled with lime and baskets of unpleasant little musty bouquets, alternately shovel out bushels of lime, or pelt with faded flowers the crowd beneath, looking as composed and serious as if fulfilling some religious penance. Sure such a travestie of mirth never was beheld! The Italians *have* some fun about them, and play the harlequin like gentlemen; but the others!

When the glimpse of a pretty woman is caught through her veil or wire mask she is assailed by lime and flour sugar-plums as hard and offensive as shot, and pelted with flowers picked from the street, until all the arms in her neighbourhood ache from exhaustion, and she sinks back in her carriage overladen and whitened like a plaster statue. People there were inhuman enough to let down little iron hooks to catch the hats and cloaks and chains of ladies and gentlemen, and sometimes to inflict serious injury. A ruffian flung a stone at an ambassadress the other day, and nearly broke her arm; a French zouave flung a handful of lime into my face, and sent me home to suffer for days. But there is no redress; short of a positive assault, all is excused in this most ill-natured saturnalia, where the greatest fun is to try who can hurt his neighbour most.

The ancient Romans marked their season of Feriæ by universal peace, happiness, and liberty. Slaves were manumitted, and masters waited on their servants at the feast; and doubtless they would thus have handed down the tradition to their descendants, had not the Christian strangers of modern days, called by the Romans "barbarians," misapplied and abused the once genial and classic games in honour of the god Saturn, who in the golden age ruled with his wife Astræa, or

Justice, over the tribes of ancient Latium, and 'was worshipped in his lofty temple on the Capitoline Mount.

It was cold and disagreeably windy weather, and clouds of white dust strewed the streets, the houses, the carriages, poisoned the air, and clung to one's clothes, and face, and hair. The roars, the cries, the screams, the rush and roll of a great multitude, made it a scene of perplexity, annoyance, and discomfort not to be described. No one laughed—no one joked amid this Babel; it was noise without mirth, romping without play. I was inexpressibly disappointed and disgusted.

At five o'clock the Corso is cleared; and after the *carabinieri* have properly persecuted and annoyed the crowd, in order to make room, eight or ten riderless horses, covered with jingling chains and little sharp-pointed stars and triangles of gilt metal, rush or dawdle along according to their private feelings at the time, like runaway beasts that no one will take the trouble to catch. These miserable apologies are called the *Barberi*, because Arabian horses used to run here in the good old times; but nothing now remains of the Arabians except their name, as it is yet commemorated in a street called the "Ripresa dei Barbari," where they are caught after accomplishing their dismal career.

This contemptible wind-up to the day's weariness is wretched beyond description. I thought of Ascot and Epsom, and the noble satin-coated steeds scarcely touching mother-earth in their giddy flight across the great heathery commons, and I could scarcely believe the scraggy animals which had just passed were of the same race. Each day I returned home from the Corso more weary and fatigued—a moving mass of white dust, sitting knee-deep in dirty bouquets and *débris* of *confetti*.

The only part of the Carnival that moved me with a sensation of enjoyment was the night of the "*Moccoli*." Dark-winged benignant night wrapped the flaunting scene in her sable mantle, harmonising the incongruous groups into broad masses—dark, brooding, mysterious. The hum of the multitude, united and softened in the gloom, rose up like a vast chorus of rejoicing; the ribald jest, the insolent attack, was mitigated as the lights came out by millions, above, below, around—"whiter than new snow on the raven's back," as Juliet says—a universe of bright twinkling stars. On the windows of the palaces, along the roofs, in the balconies, there were lights—myriads of lights; while below, every creature among those moving thousands carried his or her taper—sometimes a whole bunch—dancing and dashing to and fro in the dark

streets like planets fallen from their spheres, and fairly gone mad. After a time the glittering mass resolved itself into what appeared the deep precipitous sides of a mighty cavern, blazing with countless flames that ebbed to and fro in the evening breeze like waves of gems rising to meet the heavens. Meanwhile, the moon, pale and subdued, shone serenely in a softened atmosphere of blue.

The fun waxed fast and furious during the two hours' duration of this grand and dazzling pageant; but to my mind it was more subdued and chastened to the humanities of life than the *charivari* of the day. Those who merely looked on like myself, and bore no *moccolo*, were let alone and unmolested, or only saluted with now and then a long doleful cry of "*Vergogna, vergogna, senza moccolo, senza moccolo-o-o*"—a kind of indignant wail in accents of infinite disgust—or a sharp "*Come, signora! senza moccolo, par impossibile—è pazza!*" from some pert youth, who, finding his reproaches ineffectual, walked scornfully away, brandishing his light vigorously to assault a more congenial stranger.

The showers of lime and the bouquets had now vanished, all being intent on the exquisite fun of extinguishing each other's taper. And fun there was—real good living fun, not at all of the drawing-room sort—

uproarious tumult, universal deafening noise, fighting, screaming, laughing, and struggling—men scuffling over the expiring remnants of a light, women stretching half over the balconies and struggling out of carriages after obstinate tapers held securely on high; whilst, lo! from behind—thump!—it is gone; and the cry, "*Senza moccolo!*" rings out, and then all separate in chase of new fun, and are instantly re-engaged, fighting hard as ever. "*Moccoli, morte a chi non porta moccoli!*" sounds again; men rush hither and thither, carrying torches, paper lanterns, and pyramids of light, dancing to and fro on long poles, until the cry becomes like the watchword of a general conflagration.

Along the street there were windows and doors full of merry Roman girls—jolly, rollicking grisettes, only *so* handsome!—mad with fun and laughter, holding high above their heads the fated *moccoli*, which crowds of gallants were endeavouring by indescribable feats to extinguish. Their riotous ringing shouts echo in my ears. How they did laugh!—it was delicious! They were always at the same game whenever we passed, and would be at it now had the bell not sounded at eight o'clock—that horrid knell—when all the world is driven away, and the last *moccolo* is blown out by those disagreeable *carabinieri*, who seem

to have a wicked spite against the mirth in which they cannot join.

And so it is over, and Rome quiet. The hosts of strangers are gone, disappearing in great machines dragged by strings of horses to the station; and the streets are silent, and the carriages no longer lined with white to save them from the showers of *confetti;* and I am truly glad, and never wish to see Rome desecrated by the Carnival again.

I now resume my account of that portion of ancient Rome in the vicinity of the tomb of Cecilia Metella. On returning a few days afterwards, I passed through the circus of Romulus, out by the ruined Arch of Triumph on the Albano road, and found myself in a feathering grove of elm-trees, fringing the inequalities of the Campagna. The perfume of violets blossoming in the fine herbage around their roots scented the refreshing breeze, and swept over the verdant expanse, singularly and most picturesquely broken by ruins—here, a temple; there, a ruined portico; near by, a wall overmantled by ivy—all serving to mark the rise and fall of the ground, backed by the Claudian aqueducts on one side, while on the other Rome herself, plainly defined, crowned the Cœlian and Esquiline Hills. Nature and art combined to form a scene of Arcadian beauty and Palladian grandeur; the past, the

present, and the future were visible to the reflective eye; the broad heavens overshadowed all; and the setting sun, that eye of the universe, gave the final touch to the harmonious unity of this sublime picture, where—

> "The green hills are clothed with leafy blossom;
> Through the grass the quick-eyed lizard rustles,
> And the bills of summer birds sing welcome as we pass."

I strolled on through the open wood towards the small ruined church of St. Urbano alla Caffarella, once a temple of classic beauty, dedicated, it is said, to Bacchus, whose picturesque worship was especially suited to these wild idyllic solitudes, where the sighing of the wind across the Campagna might be mistaken for Pan with his reedy pipes wooing some coy nymph; or where the summer breeze might whisper the voice of Zephyr as he approached the chariot of the light-footed Iris; or where the deep shadows in the clustered trees resolve themselves into the forms of dryads and hamadryads, half hidden in green leaves beside clear brooks whose bubbling waters sparkle on the flowery turf. It is easy even now to recall the mysterious charm of Pantheism in regions once devoted to its rites; to transform every ruder sound into the discordant laugh of a satyr or a mocking faun; to people the valleys with green-

haired nereids, and to believe that a spirit or a god appears in the grotesque contortions of the gnarled trees around. Solitude feeds these fancies. I was alone, and gave free rein to my imagination; built up every ruined altar and decaying temple whose ruins now strew that verdant plain; filled the portico of Bacchus' ancient fane with worshippers; crowned the hill with glowing Bacchantes, torch in hand, ready to celebrate the Brumalia with shouts and cries as they bear aloft the golden image of the god crowned with vine-leaves and purple grapes. I pictured, too, those pure and poetic existences of the "graceful superstition" of old, the nymphs, whose haunts were in the wooded dale or piny mountain, "in forests by slow stream or pebbly spring, in chasms and watery depths," dividing under their gentle sway all the realms of Nature. Could I at that moment have beheld one "in the flesh," I would gladly have risked the delirium which it is said was the penalty paid for the curiosity of those bold mortals who dared to gaze on their immortal beauty.

But to resume. I now had reached the temple of Bacchus, barbarously disfigured by being converted into a church, which has in its turn become a ruin. Below the decaying altar a dark door leads down into the catacombs, which extend even to this distance into the

Campagna; but the door has been closed ever since a party of young collegians, attended by their tutors, were lost in the gloomy passages. I looked with horror on the portal which had led them, young, fresh, and happy, to so dismal a fate. Below the temple, or church, the ground rapidly sinks into a deep and narrow valley, enclosed by soft rounded hills, at whose base runs a stream—the Almo, I believe. Immediately opposite is a dark grove of ilex-trees, circular in shape, whose thickly-matted branches form a deep shade under the brightest sun—such a place as the wood-nymphs loved. These trees are still called "*Il bosco sacro*," and it is one of those spots anciently consecrated by solemn pagan ceremonies, where the gods revealed prophetic secrets to the priest or priestess of the neighbouring temple.

Descending into the dell, and passing to the left under the hill, I reached a deep grotto, overshadowed by fluttering aspen, feathering ash, long trailing garlands of fresh May, yellow broom, and luxuriant weeds, which beautified and concealed the ruins to which they clung. The sides of the grotto are covered with moss, the slabs along the floor are slippery with the same verdant carpet, and there is a bubbling of waters, with a fresh earthy smell of spring and flowers, which is per-

fectly delicious. The grotto is entirely uncovered, the sides are walled, and at the lower end, under a solid arch, lies the mutilated statue of a recumbent nymph buried in ivy, once that "Egeria, the sweet creation of some heart which found no mutual resting-place." For I was now standing within the sacred precincts of Egeria's retreat; and the "cave-guarded" spring that gushed from beneath the statue, and found its way into the valley along little stone-conduits bordering the walls, is said, by tradition, to be the very rill beside whose running waters Numa met his goddess and his love. Antiquarians assure us that it is not so, and that tradition has no right to appropriate this sweet spot consecrated by Nature to the sylvan deities; but I love to go in a believing spirit, and to accept the beauty, actual and suggestive, around me. I believe that this is the very grove mentioned by Livy through which flowed a perennial fountain issuing from a shady grotto where Numa resorted, without witnesses, to meet a goddess, and that therefore he dedicated it to the Muses, that they might there hold counsel with Egeria.

A tradition so replete with beauty, a spot so exquisitely romantic, are subjects too ideal and delicate to endure the rough handling of antiquarian critics. I do not desire their lore. I will only listen to the

bubbling of that sparkling little stream as it dances forth through the moss and the weeds into the valley beyond. Juvenal is said, in classical days, to have angrily lamented that the walls of the grotto were plated with rich marbles, and the fountain artificially decorated. His ire might be now appeased, for it has returned to its pristine state of solitude and simplicity—the grassy margin and the naked rock. The marble linings, the pillars, the statues, have disappeared, and Nature alone adorns the monument of the past. Egeria herself is now but a mutilated torso!

Of all the legends of infant Rome none is more poetical than the story of Numa and his goddess-wife Egeria, who descended from her place among the gods to inspire him with wisdom and counsel. Tradition says that after living some years with his first wife Tatia, the daughter of Tatius, co-sovereign with Romulus of yet unbuilt Rome, he became a widower, and was chosen to govern the growing state founded on the Seven Hills. It was then that Egeria came to his aid, and in those mysterious meetings under the sacred grove beside the little streamlet dictated that code of just and wise laws which the Roman people so prized and loved.

But, alas! Numa was not always faithful to his

spirit-bride. Egeria had rivals of her own incorporeal and mystic nature, for Numa met also the Muses in these nocturnal interviews, and boasted that he was specially distinguished by one *Tacita*, the Muse of Silence, to whom he erected temples, and taught the Romans to honour by a particular veneration. But his gentle love, Egeria—his tried and constant friend—was not to be disheartened: she loved him to the end, and we shall find her again among the classic shades of Nemi proving her love in death.

There is an extraordinary mysticism mixed up in the character of Numa, full of graceful interest and incident—his love for Egeria, her vale, her grotto with its sparkling rill, his meetings with the Muses, and the strange story told by Plutarch of his interview with Jupiter. When the Aventine was neither enclosed nor inhabited, and abounded with fresh springs and shady groves haunted by satyrs and fauns, Numa mixed the fountain where they drank with honey and wine, and thus intoxicated and caught them. They in their rage quitted their natural forms and assumed many dreadful and fearful shapes, but finding that their arts could not prevail to frighten Numa and induce him to break their bonds, they consented to reveal to him the secrets of futurity, and ended by bringing down Jupiter from heaven to discourse with him. "But," says the

story quaintly, "it was Egeria who taught Numa to manage the matter, and to send away even Jupiter himself propitious."

Standing musing under the shade of the sacred grotto, I had well-nigh forgot another ruin near at hand, also furnishing a world of recollections. I wandered along the valley in search of it, and came upon the ruins of a brick temple on the border of the river —small, indeed, but well proportioned—said to be dedicated to the god Rediculus, who prompted Hannibal, when lying there encamped, to retreat from Rome. But this tradition yields to another yet more interesting, which declares it to be the identical fane erected in honour of Fortuna Muliebris on the spot where Coriolanus met his wife and mother, and was prevailed on by their entreaties to draw off his army from Rome. What reader of Shakespeare does not instantly recall that sublime scene where Coriolanus, surrounded by the tents of the assembled Volscians, advances to greet Volumnia and Virgilia in these words?—

> "My wife comes foremost; then the honour'd mould
> Wherein this trunk was framed, and in her hand
> The grandchild to her blood. But, out, affection!
> All bond and privilege of nature, break!
> . . . . I melt, and am not
> Of stronger earth than others."

But I prefer old Livy, with his short, expressive sentences. I had brought the volume with me to read there. He describes Coriolanus, almost distracted, springing up in a transport of amazement to embrace Volumnia, who, looking reproof and anger, demands "Whether she was to receive an enemy or a son? Whether she stood in his camp a prisoner or a mother? Was it for this," she exclaims, "my life has been lengthened out—that I might behold you an exile, and afterwards an enemy? When you came within the sight of Rome, did it not recur to you, 'Within these walls are my house, my mother, wife, and children?' Had I never been a mother, then Rome would not have been besieged; had I not a son, I might have left my country free!"

I reascended the steep hill to the temple of Bacchus, feeling that I had pondered over a delicious page in the annals of the magic past.

There are cliques and sets at Rome, more varied and antagonistic in character than are often to be found in much larger and more populous cities. I have belonged a little to all, entirely to none. There is the ecclesiastical set, composed of cardinals, monsignori, and high dignitaries of the Church—very slow, pompous, and humdrum indeed, dreaming away their lives in the discharge of various pious duties, and hundreds of

years behind the busy, bustling life of the North, where climate and habits perpetually drive people onwards as if the very furies pursued them. They lazily drive about to each other's palazzi in big red coaches drawn by black horses, with a retinue of antiquated retainers in the most singular liveries, coats hanging down to their heels, and cocked-hats on their heads. Within sit the starch, solemn old gentlemen in purple and red, their pale parchment countenances never relaxing into a smile.

Once past the city gates, it is "their custom of an afternoon" to descend and walk slowly along the dusty roads between high walls which entirely obscure the prospect, attended by their extraordinary retainers, who look antique enough to have handed Mrs. Noah into the ark. Most courteously do these princes of the Church salute all who pass them; and there were two or three whom I well know by sight, from my admiration of their holy and benevolent countenances. Now and then these "grave and reverend signiors" give a reception, when some female relation of high degree receives the guests and does the honours. The Holy Father himself leaves the Vatican occasionally by one of the gates for his *trottata*, generally dressed in white, and wearing a broad hat of red silk. Then it is etiquette for every passer-by to go on his knees in the dust and receive the Papal

blessing, rendered doubly valuable by the benignant grace with which it is bestowed. But since "the evil days" of his flight and the siege, no welcome or applause ever greets his presence.

It is a ridiculous and idle prejudice for people to talk and write about the immorality of the Roman clergy; such nonsense can only proceed from the pens of ignorant, prejudiced, and evil-minded persons.

The higher ranks of the Roman clergy are remarkable for their moral conduct, serious demeanour, and blameless lives. It is most rare indeed to hear in any direction of the slightest *légèreté*, and when it is detected it is remorselessly and unhesitatingly punished. A certain monsignore gave scandal this winter by a too mundane and vain conduct and deportment, without, I believe, much, if any, criminality. He was at once degraded in the face of all Rome. The cardinals are occasionally present in general society when there is no dancing, but their manners are so reserved and distant (except to particular male friends) that they can scarcely be reckoned among the company. The parish priests of Rome are generally a most active and excellent body of men, irreproachable in conduct, and, but for the unhappy political dissensions which divide from them the sympathies of the people, would be justly and sincerely beloved. It is extremely rare to

hear a whisper of any misconduct among the religious houses of either sex. When discovered, it is uncompromisingly punished.

But to return to my immediate topic—Society. There is the set of Roman princesses, grand, haughty dames, proud of their descent from the Cornelias, the Lucretias, and the Portias of the republic. They are, as a body, remarkable for correct conduct, extreme devotion, and a lamentable want of intellectual cultivation. I believe many a raw English school-girl is better acquainted with Roman history than these princesses, born and reared amid the imposing ruins of the city of the Cæsars. They dislike strangers, unless especially introduced—particularly Protestants, who are not considered Christians—and clan and club together in a *noli me tangere* spirit very unusual among the Italians, who are in general an easy, hospitable, polite, and facile people. But the Romans generally, and especially the princes and princesses, are remarkable for their senseless pride. They are unceasingly haunted by the notion of their descent from the Fabiuses, the Maximuses, and Cæsars of old, and endeavour, very unsuccessfully, to ape the dignified and solemn bearing of those ancient pillars of the state—a proceeding absolutely ridiculous in the degenerate state of Rome in the nineteenth century.

As to the ladies—my special province—one must forgive them their foolish arrogance when one sees the superb palaces, the magnificent and glittering saloons they inhabit; the trains of retainers and servants that crowd their halls, and wait on their slightest caprice. From infancy they are nurtured with a luxury, and looked on by their inferiors with a devoted respect and veneration, quite sufficient to turn wiser brains, and confuse more expanded intellects. Each lady has her own *entourage* and circle—clients like the followers of the ancient senators; and although her palace may occasionally be opened for a grand ball to the *profanum vulgus*, the magnificent mistress, her debt to popularity once paid, speedily closes her doors and retires to enjoy her *morgue* and her nineteen bosom friends, washing her princely hands from all further contamination with the common or unclean.

Then there is the diplomatic set, of necessity more hospitable and affable *outwardly*, but in reality excessively exclusive. Each ambassadress forms a little court of her own, composed principally of her compatriots, the *état-major* of his excellency, and some distinguished hangers-on. Among these ladies are some women of intellect, wit, and beauty.

Then there is the American set, a numerous body, extremely sociable, and remarkable for general

intelligence, bustle, and go-ahead propensities, and for the fragile and delicate beauty of the younger ladies—those pale daughters of the New World, whose alabaster skins, melting blue eyes, and flaxen hair are nowhere more conspicuous than among the olive-complexioned, black-eyed, luscious beauties of the South.

There is also a learned set at Rome, necessarily cosmopolitan, but decidedly Catholic; and there is a rabidly Protestant set, which considers the Pope the abomination of desolation, and have been heard to stigmatise his blessing as a curse. It is wonderful they ever trust themselves within the walls of Babylon, for the spirit of the place can never visit them. Then there is that awful amalgamation of dissipation, riches, scandal, and exclusiveness, the English set, who have appropriated to themselves an entire quarter of the city, comprising the beautiful Pincian, where they have their English shops, English prices, books, papers, servants, and *cuisine*. They live much together, sharing only in the grand festivities of the Roman nobles and the diplomatic corps. They are a powerful faction, and are constantly endeavouring to Anglicise Rome by dint of money and overbearing arrogance. They picnic in solemn temples, and underground in dim and dreary baths; drink champagne among moss-grown tombs; ride donkeys to Hannibal's camp; get up horse

and hurdle races over the consecrated soil of the classic Campagna; light up the Coliseum with blue and red lights; sit on camp-stools in St. Peter's; and invade every gallery, palace, or monument with the Saxon tongue and Saxon ill-breeding. Those who wish fairly to judge of Rome proper should "stay over the season," and see the English all out, in order to understand how much they have spoilt it. They give no end of balls and suppers, dance in Lent when they dare, turn their backs on the Pope, ridicule the Catholics, talk shocking scandal—which the Italians *never* do, left to themselves—and spend oceans of money, causing Rome, at this moment, to be the dearest residence on the Continent.

Last of all, there is the artist world at Rome—a merry, genial, cosmopolitan throng, compounded of French, Italians, Germans, Swiss, English, and Americans—a jovial, many-hued company, boasting names that make one's soul thrill at the remembrance of the immortal works they are handing down to posterity. Yes, I love the artist world at Rome, and am proud to reckon some of its world-wide names among my friends:—Gibson, now, alas! gone—who, in his life, so identified himself with Greek art and Greek sculpture that he seemed to have acquired the calm repose, the dignity, and the wisdom of an ancient philosopher. Who that ever really knew Gibson did

not admire his simple, amiable nature and high-minded rectitude of character? He was at once the most modest and the most unflinching of men; pleased with the simplest meed of sincere praise, yet regardless of the opinion of the whole world if to obtain its applause he was obliged to compromise his artistic creed, the religion of his soul. A mind of this temper would have been great in any walk of life.

Then there were Crawford, the American sculptor, whose gallery still remains, and Dessoulavy, the most delightful of landscape painters, both dead; whilst among the living are Rogers and Tilten, and Miss Hosmer, the loved pupil of Gibson, and Miss Stebbings, Page, and Shakespeare Wood—Americans all but the last named. Nor must I forget Penry Williams, the greatest of English painters at Rome (or anywhere else, in his own style, to my mind) —combining the dewy softness of Constable, the clear, brilliant tone of Calcott, with a purity of style and absolute perfection of colouring all his own. He, too, might take his place "on high among the nations;" but he prefers a select few, where his kind heart and quaint drollery are well appreciated by those who enjoy his friendship.

A great name, too, is that of Tenerani, the head of the modern Italian school, to be judged of

in his noble works—uniting the force and grandeur of Thorwaldsen to the grace of Canova.

There are life and vitality yet in the modern Italian school, spite of much feebleness and affectation, as must be allowed when contemplating Tenerani's immortal work, "The Angel of the Resurrection"—perhaps the most sublime effort of modern sculpture. Then there was Overbeck, a monkish, grim old man, who lived shut up in the dreary old Cenci Palace in the filthy Ghetto—a man so silent, of aspect so uninviting, and with manners so austere, that one never could believe him capable of creating those soft visions of celestial beauty, more akin to heaven than earth—virgins, angels, and glorified spirits of ideal purity, breathing the very airs of Paradise. Cornelius also, that great father of modern German painting, long lived on the summit of the Pincian in the very house where, thirty years ago, he, in conjunction with Schadow and Overbeck, young aspiring geniuses, determined to break the bonds of custom, and first dreamt of, and then achieved, the revival of fresco-painting, now, by their works at Düsseldorf and Munich, spread over all Europe. The walls of this house are still decorated by their first efforts, which, with some crudeness and inexperience in the use of a novel material, indicate uncommon and unusual power. Riedel too, that wonderful

master of the German school who still lives, and who lights up his nymphs with beams as it were snatched from the living sunshine; and Mayer, and Coleman, the Paul Potter of our century; and many other rising geniuses among the younger artists; for I have but named the *dictators* in the republic of art of the present century. But I must stop, for in these recollections of the artist world of Rome my pen runs riot with pleasant memories.

XI.

A Classical Excursion to Albano and Nemi, intended for those fond of the History of the Past.

WE started four in number—a delightful party—on a fine, fresh, sunshiny morning in "the merrie month of May," for Albano. We were all well acquainted—all liked each other—and the gay jest and the piquant rejoinder went gaily round. We laughed at each other, at ourselves, at all the world, going forth into the Campagna through the heavy portal of San Giovanni Laterano, jealously guarded by *carabinieri*, that being the great high road to Naples.

Our party consisted of very various elements. There was an elderly friend acting duenna to our wilder spirits; calm, pleased, silent herself, but ready to share in the mirth of others. There was one highly gifted, my friend H——s, the son of a poetess, a poet himself, an antiquarian, an historian, a theologian—nothing came amiss to his well-stored mind; each stone had for him its suggestive interest, every monument its eloquent history, every lovely phase of Nature its idyl. Art and antiquity

through his mouth became simultaneously articulate. I always said, if the dry bones of "Murray's Guide" could be vivified, animated, and clothed in less "dry-as-dust" garments, the result would be H——s, the most instructive compendium and agreeable companion that ever turned over the moss-grown remains of antiquity. Our *third* was S. W——, a sculptor, quiet and gentlemanly, looking for *form* in all things, and disdaining colour and gradations of shade as things of nought, full of his art and of the antique, and withal eminently good-natured and obliging. As for the fourth, so delicate a subject as a description of myself cannot be expected. I cannot take my own portrait, as the painters did in the Florence gallery of celebrated artists, looking into a glass; for where can I find a mental mirror, "showing the inmost part," by which to draw myself? I must leave my readers to make their own sketch of me, first imploring their good offices not to paint me too black.

Well, on we rattled along the paved road, traversing the Campagna *dans tous les sens*, as the French have it. Nowhere, I believe, in the world does one drive out into a perfect wilderness, devoid of houses or inhabitants, on a paved road, rough and jolting as the high street of a country town, except in this singular and exceptional place. A few miles and we were sailing along on the

waving expanse of that grassy ocean, the turf bright as unset emeralds, its uniform colour broken by unenclosed fields of corn, with here and there tufts of luxuriant poppies, broad tracts of yellow buttercups, great staring daisies, and sweet violets. To the left lay the solemn lines of the Augustan aqueducts, linking the Alban Hills, and the pure springs that rise in their deep bosoms, to the service of that great queen of cities reposing yonder on her seven-hilled throne. Each arch forms as it were a separate picture, presenting new scenes of beauty—a gallery as unique as it is singular.

Beyond the fair face of Nature nothing arrested our attention for some miles. To the right was the distant outline of the Street of Tombs, mound after mound of dark ruins marking the successive monuments. A mass of ruins, void and without form, close on the Appian Way, was pointed out by H——s as *Roma Vecchia*, so named because the contadini firmly believe this to have been the site of the ancient city, the why or the wherefore being utterly obscure. It was probably a temple or a villa bordering the "Viarum Regina," along whose pavement the chariots and the horsemen went and came, thick as the falling leaves in an autumnal gale.

We came at length to the foot of the Alban Hills, which rise abruptly from the plain. Before ascending,

the modern road is joined by the old Appian Way, which shoots forth out of the city through the Porta San Sebastiano, straight as an arrow launched from a bow. If we had had eyes sufficiently long-sighted, we might have seen the sentinel keeping guard over the crumbling arch of Drusus.

Where the ancient and the modern roads unite is a wretched tumble-down wayside *osteria*, called Frattocchie—a cut-throat-looking place enough—redolent of fleas, sour wine, dirt, and bad smells, especially by reason of its *cucina cucinante*, in which garlic would decidedly predominate. H——s here stopped the carriage, not from any uncharitable purpose of condemning us to eat in such a hole, but to call our attention to the spot as being the supposed site of Clodius's murder by Milo, the friend of Cicero, whom he chose for his advocate on his trial for the murder. But Cicero arriving at the Forum in a litter, and seeing the space filled with soldiers under arms, and Pompey himself seated on high as president, was so confounded and terrified that he could scarcely give audible utterance to that celebrated discourse, "Pro Milone," which would alone have immortalised his eloquence.

H——s recalled our early recollections of that most fascinating of books next to the Arabian Nights,

Plutarch's Lives. "It chanced," said he, "unfortunately, that Milo, going to Lanuvium to consecrate a priest, met Clodius, surrounded by his clients and retainers, on this spot, where then stood a temple to the Bona Dea. Milo was quietly reposing in his coach, like a luxurious Roman gentleman, in company with his wife Fausta, the daughter of Sylla; but, as in the later mediæval days of Montagues and Capulets, the servants of either party took up the well-known feud of their masters, and commenced fighting. One of the servants of Milo pierced Clodius's shoulder, and Milo, considering that if Clodius survived he would eternally devote him and his house to the furies of revenge, ordered his attendants to finish him. And so fell Clodius."

We drove on, rejoicing in the knowledge we were thus pleasantly picking up like flowers along the hedgerows, and began to mount the hill at a slow place. S. W—— got down to smoke and to ruminate, as he said, on what a fine group might be made of Milo murdering Clodius; H——s fell to studying "Childe Harold," which he produced from the recesses of his pocket; our quiet duenna was silent; and I set about examining the glorious view that opened on all sides as we mounted the lower slopes of the classic Alban Hills.

The road was bordered on the left by low rocky banks, with here and there a mass of ruins or a group of great spreading pine-trees, whose sharp lines cut against the radiant sky with the full force of Italian contrast. Flowers wreathed many-coloured garlands over the reddish rock; little green lizards rushed to and fro amid perfumed blossoms; gay butterflies fluttered; and spring birds sang an audible chorus of jocund spring. A little shrine to the Madonna was cut out of the tufa rock, and decorated with flowers; a lamp burned before her image, which was enclosed in a glass case; in front kneeled some contadine in the pretty costume of the country, with rich red folds falling from their heads over shawls of white muslin.

To the right lay vineyards and gardens, looking like gigantic patches of basket-work from the yellow *canne*, or reeds, to which the young vines and just opening plants were trained; olives waved their pale, shadowless boughs among the vineyards, spreading their fresh, whitish leaves towards the sun. Here and there a valley sank deep down, and a stream rushed away in the direction of the Campagna, tumbling over great masses of rock, and cooling the air around. This was the near view.

Behind lay the Queen of Capitals—her domes, towers, spires, and walls thickening on the low hills far away

—vast, shadowy, dreamy — melting into the azure haze of distance.

The rich and many-tinted wilderness, on whose soil uprose the cities of Latium, spread around in its vast length and breadth; while to the far right a long monotonous line marked the shore towards Ostia and Antium (Porto d'Anzio), with the Tyrrhene Sea visible beyond all, a sheet of burnished gold. There was immensity in that view, suggestive of chaos and eternity. The land ran into the glistening sea undefined, and the mountains melted into the clouds, knitting the elements together in one great mystic whole around the Eternal City throned on those blue hills! What takes me a certain time to write I drank in with a few delicious glances, like Mahomet's ascent to the seventh heaven. However, it was soon over. We had now approached within sight of Albano, scarcely to be perceived until one is under its gateway. As to the lake, so utterly invisible is it from this side, that one would be ready to venture one's life that no lake nearer than Thrasymene existed.

To the left, close on a cluster of villas standing in rich orange and lemon groves, at the entrance to Albano, stand the massive ruins of a tomb, second only in size to that of Cecilia Metella, once encased with white marble, now but a mere mound of crum-

bling brickwork, crowned with a perfect diadem of plants, shrubs, and grasses. That tomb, H——s informed us (and so do the guide-books, only they want his pleasant, well-turned sentences and interesting details, giving as 'twere the day and hour), was now admitted on all hands to be the resting-place of Pompey's ashes, borne by the hands of his second wife, Cornelia, from Egypt, she never resting until she had deposited the monumental urn within sight of the city over which he had ruled, and where men had surnamed him "the Great."

Pompey, defeated in the final struggle at Pharsalia, fled to his fond and faithful Cornelia, who fainted as she heard of his mischance. Together in one Seleucian galley they sought the hospitality of Ptolemy, King of Egypt, at Pelusium; for Pompey, Roman though he was, could not bring himself to ask safety and mercy at the hands of conquering Cæsar. A council was called among the Egyptians, and it was resolved that Pompey must perish, on the mean principle of subserviency to Cæsar. He was brought from the ship where he had left Cornelia, whose eye followed his every motion, suspicious of the event. She saw him seat himself in the little craft—a fishing-boat—and take out to read a speech he had prepared to address to Ptolemy. As the boat approached the shore, hope shot into her

sinking heart. A crowd of persons advanced (as she thought to do him honour), but at the moment when, stepping from the boat, he placed his foot on shore, a base assassin came from behind and stabbed him in the back. She saw him fall, like an ancient Roman, covering his face in his mantle, and she saw no more. She too fell, and a shriek so piercing rent the air, that it reached the cruel group gathered about the dying hero.

"That shriek," said H——s, "chronicled by Plutarch, has come down to us sharp and clear through accumulated centuries. I never pass that grey ruin without picturing to myself the stately Roman matron landing at Antium, followed by a long train of mourners and retainers—pale and worn, yet dignified and composed, shrouded in her mourning robes—bearing the urn containing the ashes of her husband to this very spot, on his broad lands near ancient Alba."

The modern town of Albano is as ugly a place as I would *not* wish to see, consisting of one long street, where everybody can see everybody else, a great deal of dust, some tawdry shops, and two tolerable hotels—which to me, however, would be unbearable, because standing in the centre of the town. I had pictured to myself an elegant, classic Locanda on the borders of the lake, overshadowed by evergreen woods. To be sure there are the very pretty gardens of the Villa

Doria, always deliciously cool and shady, and at all hours hospitably thrown open to the public—a favour the more to be esteemed as the family spend there a portion of every autumn. Ruins are said to exist here, marking the villas of Pompey, Clodius, and also of Domitian, who built an amphitheatre nearer the lake, and committed horrid cruelties. The site of Alba Longa, however, must not be sought for in the modern town, but in a quite different situation. We drove through the long street out on the further side of Albano: still no signs of lake, not even a *soupçon* of where a lake *might be*. As we descended a steep hill through rocky banks overshadowed by trees, the country looked wild and pretty, tossed about in a picturesque manner.

Close on the gates of Albano, towards Ariccia, on the brow of a descent, H——s called our attention to a most remarkable tomb—a square mass of majestic proportions surmounted by four low obelisks at the corners, with a pedestal in the centre. Two of the obelisks have disappeared, and the summit has become quite a little grove of low shrubs and young trees and creepers. "From just such a tomb a voice might thunder forth, such as Ariosto describes," said H——s, "when he makes the soul of the departed warrior become audible, and speak terrible words from his sepulchre!" H——s laughed

at the idea of this tomb being the burying-place of the Horatii and Curiatii, as has been affirmed. Their celebrated conflict took place much nearer Rome. "There is no doubt," he said, "that it was of Etruscan workmanship, and erected to the son of Porsenna;" that same king we all know so well, from Macaulay's spirited lines beginning—

"Lars Porsenna of Clusium by the nine gods he swore,
That the great house of Tarquin should suffer wrong no more."

This monument was erected by the Etruscans to the memory of his son Aruns, killed by Aristodemus in his attack upon Ariccia; and a truly imposing idea it conveys of Etruscan architecture, second only in massive grandeur to that of the Egyptians.

On a precipitous hill opposite, and about a mile distant from Albano, the small town, or almost village, of Ariccia crowns the height. Between lies a deep valley, but the twin hills of Ariccia and Albano are linked together by a stupendous viaduct, at least one hundred and fifty feet high, with four or five rows of open arches; a most striking achievement of the late Papal Government, by which, at an immense cost, it was erected. To the left an oblong and strangely-marked plain of grass appears, many miles in circuit, surrounded by low, square-shaped hills, unpleasing in aspect, but curious as being the site of an extinct vol-

cano—afterwards a lake, similar to those of Albano and Nemi—now, however, entirely dried up. We followed the course of the ravine to the foot of the viaduct, which towered above our heads, as it seemed, into the very clouds, and then reascended on the opposite side towards Ariccia, which looked pretty and Oriental, with its white walls and its large-domed church designed by Bernini. This last might pass for a respectable mosque when seen from a distance.

It is wonderful to see Ariccia such a vulgar, dirty, modern little place, and to think that it has been sung by Horace and Virgil, and chronicled by Livy and Plutarch, none of whose writings will certainly gain in pleasing associations by a near knowledge of it as it is. There is a miserable inn, to which strangers resort during the malaria season in Rome. We left the carriage and walked along the road, crossing the viaduct, and admiring the fine views over the Campagna, the sea, and the vast unfathomable woods; but we could still not discern a trace of the cosy Alban Lake, whose waters are so deeply buried under the overshadowing hills.

On leaving Ariccia, another valley intervenes between it and an adjacent height half a mile off, on which Genzano, whither we were bound, is situated. We had now penetrated into the deep primeval woods of aged oaks,

chestnuts, gnarled ash, and elm, that clothe the lower portion of the Alban Mountains as with a great mantle, the entire range ending in the elevated summit of Monte Cavo, now conspicuous to our left, and crowned by a white-walled convent. This convent occupies the site of what was once the temple of Jupiter Latialis, built by Tarquin the Proud as the solemn gathering-place of the forty-seven cities of the Latin Confederation—a splendid position, commanding the entire land from Soracte to Antium. "No profane hand," said H——s (who had become more and more eloquent and interesting as we advanced further and further into the classic scenes of Rome's early history), "dared to desecrate or injure that sacred shrine, the renowned scene of the Feriæ Latinæ, endeared to the superstitious remembrance of all Latium, where Julius Cæsar had celebrated his triumph as dictator, and thousands of less illustrious generals enjoyed the honours of the Ovation. Even in the beginning of the last century ruins remained, stupendous enough to mark the temple's original size and magnitude; but they were all destroyed and appropriated by Cardinal York, the last of the Stuarts, for the purpose of erecting that hideous Passionist convent now visible like a white spot on the summit. Ruins, marbles, columns, statues, all were ruthlessly swept away,

leaving the consecrated site of Rome's early triumphs without a vestige of the past—an act of destruction the more extraordinary, as the reigning pontiff, Pius VI., both understood and admired art and antiquity. All that now remains of that pompous and magnificent past is the old Via Sacra, vestiges of which are to be still traced through the chestnut woods on the face of the mountain opposite Rome, in the direction of Rocca di Papa."

The venerable primeval forests that surround Genzano and Ariccia are exquisite. Fine single trees stand forth in grassy openings, where early spring flowers of those bright hues peculiar to the South spring out of the moss-grown rocks that break the surface of the ground in picturesque confusion. Here and there the wood deepens under a lower growth of ilex, laurel, box, and arbutus, their dark boughs lending a mystic character to a sylvan region.

Here Numa wandered in retired and secret places, haunted by the nymphs whose soft voices he loved. Here of old dwelt Zephyr and Echo, and here murmured many a trickling stream. We had no time to dwell on these bewitching memories, but proceeded along a magnificent terrace—once the Appian Way, now the high road from Rome to Naples — and thundered through a splendid avenue of fine old

trees (rugged and ancient as those sweet woods, precious to every one by some peculiarly pleasant days stolen from the bustle of London—Burnham Beeches) called the Olmata, leading into the small town or *paese* of Genzano, the last of those attractive outskirts of Rome to which its inhabitants escape during the dangerous summer heats.

"Look," said H——s, "at that round hill just in advance of the town and nearer the plain, covered by vineyards, and crowned by a mediæval tower. That is said to be the site of ancient Corioli, whither Coriolanus fled when exiled from Rome. From thence he issued, leading the Volscian forces against his native city; and there he returned when, overcome by the entreaties of his mother and wife, he withdrew from the siege. No ruins remain of the ancient city where the Roman general ended his days. Some say that he was murdered by the Volscians out of resentment at his conduct—others that he lived to be an old man, and was heard often to complain 'that the evils of exile bore much heavier on the aged.' Pliny says that even in his day no traces of Corioli were visible. The hill is now called Monte Giove."

Genzano consists of one broad street on the declivity of a hill. Below are hills crowned with feudal castles, remnants of the middle-age dominion of the stout

Roman barons, now ruined and romantic adjuncts to a landscape both grand and beautiful. The valleys lead down into the vast expanse of the outlying Campagna, encircled by a shining circlet of gold—the suggestive Mediterranean, along whose unruffled and tideless shores many a white-sailed ship was visible.

By the time we had reached Genzano we were just in that state of mind and body proper to the appreciation of a good dinner. Even our poet and antiquarian so far descended from his Parnassian heights as to express the pleasure he felt that our long fast was to be broken.

We were received by a most kind and hospitable host, whose *casa* is the only decent residence within the precincts of Genzano, by name Jacobini, nephew to the late minister of finance. When Italians *are* hospitable and cordial, the Red Indians themselves cannot exceed the heartiness of their welcome, the boundlessness of their household generosity. Jacobini's face beamed with genuine delight as he conducted us up long flights of stairs to the *piano-nobile* of his house, near where the swallows build their nests—the modern Italians and the birds having a decided *simpatia* for an elevated situation just under the eaves. The Queen of Sheba was not received by King Solomon, in all his glory, with more *empressement* than we were: the best chambers

were opened — the hospitable board spread by an old contadina, wearing a red petticoat edged with green, a green bodice laced with red, bows of the same colour as shoulder-knots, a lace apron and tucker, and yards of snow-white dimity stowed away in mysterious folds about her almost hairless head. Great gold earrings and a large brooch completed her attire. Round the room in which our refection was served hung four portraits of lovely girls—one too many for the Graces.

"Ah!" said Jacobini, "those are the pictures of my sisters—*mie care sorelline.* When they were all at home we had a happy home. I loved them well; but they are all married now. She with the red rose in her hair, the best, the prettiest, went last—*e adesso son solo!*" and he sighed.

H——s whispered to me he should like to write a sonnet on that sweet beauty-sister, who never would grow old or faded, either she or the rose, under their glass frame, whatever the original might do.

S. W—— remarked, what a lovely bust she would make.

But Jacobini looked pained, and changed the conversation, saying—

"*Oh Dio, quanto è cambiata adesso, povera mia Rosa*

tanto amata!" ("Oh heavens! my poor beloved Rose, how she is changed since then!")

But there was no time for sadness; for the soup, or *minestra*, now appeared under the beneficent auspices of the *donna di facienda*, who, in her red petticoat, skipped about with the agility of a young *ballarina*. Then came a huge bowl of *such* macaroni, with savoury sauce—such macaroni as only Italians know how to prepare; and three dishes of roast and boiled meat, and delicious *frittura*, light and airy as crisp snow on highest mountains, and piles of savoury *salamè*, and ham and salad, and sweets and fruit—*such* a dinner, which, truth to say, we required not the hospitable pressing of Jacobini largely to enjoy! Bottle after bottle of wine was produced, the corks flying pell-mell around. This was the *vino sincero* of Genzano, famous for its vineyards—a wine to be drunk in tumblers (like strong sweet cider in taste). Then came sherry and claret, and Heaven knows what other beverages. I began to tremble at last for the heads of Poetry and Sculpture, who were obliged perforce to partake of all, no refusal being permitted by Signor Jacobini, whose broad face grew redder and fuller with every bottle. By the time dinner was over, we were all the most warm and cordial friends that ever sacrificed to Bacchus under the classic shadow of Monte

Cavo. We were to remain for a week?—No, we couldn't. For the night?—No, a thousand thanks, it was impossible; the strong walls of Rome would not contain our agonised and expectant families did we not return that night. "*Ma supplico loro, mi facciano la compiacenza, il gran favore,*". &c., &c. Well, we came then to a compromise; we would return and spend another day, and eat another dinner—(small blame to us for the same); so the worthy Jacobini, who had eaten, drunk, and talked like ten ordinary men, was appeased; and we broke up, to view under his chaperonage the classic beauties of the Lake of Nemi, which, like its sister of Albano, lies so hidden that not a glimpse had we of its existence, although positively *on* its shores. At the top of the straggling street an imposing old palace obtrudes its gloomy, heavy front between us and the green woods around, belonging to the Duca Cesarini, an Italian magnifico married to an English lady. Jacobini told us a mighty pretty story about their wooing, which I can't here transcribe, feeling myself in honour bound to chronicle the classical souvenirs of "Lacus Nemorensis," rather than its legends of the nineteenth century, however enticing. Passing along another of those grand leafy avenues, or galleries, surrounding Genzano, whose overarching branches formed a long-drawn aisle of that mighty cathedral whose roof is heaven, we reached

a gate opening into the recesses of the duchessa's garden. Would I could describe the scenes of exquisite beauty that broke on us, as if by enchantment, when that gate was opened!

The gardens of Circe, of Armida, nay, of Elysium itself, I do not believe could be more wondrously fair than these scented groves encircling the Lake of Nemi. The lake itself opens before us as a secluded, unruffled expanse, five miles in circumference. Its waters are of a peculiarly deep green, reflected from the overshadowing woods, now bursting into the brilliant colours of spring. A more romantic, lonely little tarn, embosomed in silent hills which dimple around it like the leaves of a gigantic lily—the waters its cup-like petal—never opened to human eye. The spirit and worship of the old gods of Greece seem still to cling to these once consecrated groves, and to recall dim visions of those days when the gods loved to descend from high Olympus to drink the new wine of the vintage, and dally with the fair daughters of earth.

Jacobini—dear, good-natured creature!—neither caring for nor remembering the classicalities, dragged us about to admire fountains flinging waters into marble basins, which flashed back in stars and irises; swans reposing under willows in little emerald islands; and countless camellia-trees, whose waxen flowers of red and

white blushed forth from thickets of shining leaves. He then led us by long galleries of verdure, formed of laurel, ilex, and other dark and fragrant trees, down towards the lake, through a woody labyrinth of paths.

All at once I missed H——s, and as I wanted to hear all his lore, I anxiously hunted him out. He was at last discovered seated, book in hand, in a delicious arbour of flowering oleanders. To our question, "What he was reading?" he replied, "Byron, of course;" and then and there repeated these lines, which we heard on the very spot with renewed and particular pleasure:—

> "Lo, Nemi! navelled in the wooded hills
> So far, that the uprooting wind which tears
> The oak from its foundation, and which spills
> The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears
> Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares
> The oval mirror of thy glassy lake."

Poor Jacobini looked terribly bored at our enthusiasm, to him utterly incomprehensible, and begged some of the party to descend through the winding paths to the edge of the lake. I preferred remaining to hear H——s discourse upon the many graceful mythological legends which lend such a charm to these now desolate shores.

Opposite to where we sat, sheltered from the heat by an overhanging *berceau*, appeared the very pic-

turesque village of Nemi, half-way up on the hillside. H——s said that there were near it some vestiges of a temple, supposed to have been dedicated to the Ephesian Diana, to whose worship all the woods bordering the lake were dedicated. Here Diana was worshipped, together with Hippolytus, the unhappy son of Theseus by his first queen. Theseus, after having escaped from the infernal regions, whither he had descended for the purpose of carrying off Proserpine, married, on his return to earth, Phædra, the daughter of Minos—Hippolytus being absent at the time. But when he returned, Venus, whom he had unwittingly offended, inspired Phædra with a guilty passion for her son-in-law, who—like a second Joseph rejecting her suit—was by her represented to his father as guilty of an incestuous passion. Theseus, in revenge, consigned him to the fury of Neptune, and a hideous chimera was sent, in the shape of a sea-monster, to assail him as he drove in a chariot disconsolately along the Athenian shore. Hippolytus, unable to control his terrified horses, was thrown headlong to the ground and killed. But it is said that Æsculapius subsequently brought him to life, and Diana, covering him with a cloud, bore him to her temple, where he was thenceforth honoured and worshipped together with herself, the goddess of Chastity. Racine has immortalised this story in his

noble verses, and Rachel has in her turn immortalised Racine by her magnificent acting.

To this temple Iphigenia, with her brother Orestes and his friend Pylades, escaped from Tauris, carrying with them the statue of Diana, which the Delphian Oracle had commanded the wretched Orestes to transport there, so that under the shade of these sacred woods his wearied spirit might find repose.

In these groves the nymph Egeria wandered when death separated her from Numa, her human lover. Inconsolable for his loss, she woke the echoes by her lamentations, and fed the flowers with her tears, until all-merciful Diana, pitying her grief, changed her into a fountain, which still trickles down into the lake near by the village, on the site of "Glorious Diana's fane." Within such groves, and beside such a tranquil lake, Actæon perhaps might have gazed—with that fatal curiosity which cost him so dear—on the fair form of the chaste goddess while she bathed in these placid waters. Here, on clear summer nights, when the amorous breath of Zephyr alone fanned the breeze, and Boreas and his band were deep buried in Ocean's caves, Diana may have awakened Endymion sleeping on the mountain-tops.

* * * * * *

Our party being once more assembled, we wandered awhile through shady walks and overhanging woods

carpeted with purple violets, and abounding in a peculiar kind of bright blue aster, which contrasted charmingly with the moss-grown ground. It was difficult to tear oneself away from this Arcadian paradise, but on my remarking to Jacobini what a charming place it would be during the summer heats, he quite astonished me by saying it is more than suspected of malaria, and therefore little frequented.

It was with much regret that I left Genzano and the pellucid lake, but the good Jacobini's feelings amounted almost to despair. Again he entreated us to sleep the night, but finding that impossible, contented himself by mounting into the carriage with us, and escorting us on our way. We returned by the same road as far as Ariccia, when he departed, bidding us many times *addio, buon viaggio,* and *rivederle,* and bearing from us solemn promises of a speedy return.

Leaving Ariccia, we mounted by an ascending road into the recesses of those great woods which clothe the Lakes of Albano and Nemi and the lower spurs of Monte Cavo. In such woods, among the mountains of Greece, stood in old times Jupiter's famous temple at Dodona, embosomed in sacred oaks, every tree among them endued with a human voice. The slanting rays of the sun cast a chequered shade on the ground, covered with every blossom of the spring: violets,

yellow daffodils, blue hyacinths dedicated to melancholy and the dead; the anemone, with its dark petals, sprung from the blood of Adonis; and snowdrops, called here "the tears of the Madonna." A gentle wind rustled among the lower shrubs and saplings, and mingled with the murmur of bees busy among gay patches of yellow broom. The singing of birds, particularly that of the nightingale, is never heard to such advantage as in Italian woods, where, like the *cicale*, they seem literally to warble away their little throats, and kill themselves with sweet songs.

It was a delicious scene, to be peopled in imagination by a happier, freer, diviner race than ours. The living rock here and there protruded bare, or covered with emerald mosses and many delicate varieties of fern plants; while overhead waved ancient trees of chestnut, elm, and ilex, twisted into strange shapes, like spirits writhing in the torments of Hades. For about an hour we wound among the mazes of this enchanting wood, and then emerged on the summit of a hill to another phase of all-beauteous Nature. Below opened the Lake of Albano, unruffled, waveless, its precipitous and wooded banks mirrored in the calm waters. Light broke into my soul at the sight of that beautiful lake which I had so long

looked for in vain: it came before me like the image of a beloved and long-sought friend. Before us Monte Cavo rose in one long line from its shores; to the left lay Castel Gondolfo, romantically crowning a precipitous cliff embowered in dark woods. The character of the scenery greatly resembles that of the Lake of Nemi, but on a larger scale: the same untroubled waters enclosed in a deep cup-like basin—the same soft harmonious beauty—the same richly-wooded mountains, rising steeply around—the same brilliant colouring, peculiar to this "land of many hues"—the same solitude, and almost mystic repose—the same absence of any living being, house, or sign of life. Beautiful as it is, there is a melancholy, plaintive look about it, eloquently suggestive of happier times. The shores seem heavy with sad memories of other days. Had I not already known the Lake of Albano to be rich in classical traditions—the fabled land whence came the first germ of Rome—I should have guessed from its aspect that the past had there left its indelible imprint, and that the history of those fair, sad shores, which even under the joyous sun look ominous and foreboding, was to be sought in bygone centuries.

This lake lies deep in the crater of an extinct volcano, and its waters bear that dark look peculiar to fluid

spontaneously emitted by a convulsion of Nature. Few valleys or ravines break its green sides, which descend in precipitous lines to the margin. There is the monotony of perfect and exquisite beauty, such as one remarks in the classical works of Grecian sculpture, where a slight defect or shortcoming would be almost a relief to the over-taxed eye. An indication of rocks on the opposite shore, slightly basaltic, marks, as H——s informed us, the site of Alba Longa; for the researches of Sir William Gell have finally settled that much-disputed question. There, as goes the legend, once stood the palace of a mighty king, who, in punishment for his pride, was destroyed by fire sent from heaven by the gods—a catastrophe supposed to have some obscure connection with the volcanic explosion to which the lake owes its origin. The ruins of his palace are yet pointed out in the dark bosom of the waters, when from long drought they sink below their usual level; and the contadini tell many fearful tales of immense grottoes, arches, and columns; of a whirlpool in the centre, which renders the lake dangerous for boats; and of the spirits of the dead, which still float over the submerged walls which they once inhabited.

Alba Longa, or the "White Long City," was founded by Ascanius, the son of Æneas, who himself was excluded, like Moses, from the "pleasant land" promised

to his followers. Æneas dwelt on the Latin plains, near the shore on which he had landed, on the sandy, barren spot where the white sow had farrowed her thirty young. After Ascanius, surnamed "Iulus," or the "Soft-haired," who founded the city by the calm lake which yet nurses in its bosom the ruins of his proud palace, came Numitor and Amulius, who divided the throne; but after a time Amulius wickedly prevailed over his brother, and commanded his niece Sylvia, who had been born and reared within the new city, to become a priestess of Vesta; but Sylvia forgot her vows, and bore the twins Romulus and Remus, who, to conceal her shame, were borne away into the plain, and consigned to the great river "Father Tiber," which divides the level land of the Campagna. The current bore them to a wild fig-tree which grew near the site on which the Forum was afterwards built; and thus Rome came to be founded by the twins, and Alba Longa fell into decay, and was forgotten, until all that now remains is that faint line of dark rock rending the green sward. But the Romans remembered always the old cradle of their race, and therefore they founded the great temple of Jupiter Latialis, whose majestic portico once crowned the summit of Monte Cavó, the highest point on these Alban Hills; and there all the tribes worshipped, looking over the broad lands of ancient Latium.

As we sat among the ilex-trees many recollections inspired by the place arose. H——s reminded us that these wooded heights had afterwards been appropriated to the villas of Pompey and Domitian, traces of whose summer palaces are still distinguishable. We followed a magnificent avenue of ilex-trees leading along the upper margin of the lake into the small town of Castel Gondolfo, where the Pope has a villa to which he retires during the summer heats. We walked hurriedly through the small town—a poor and poverty-stricken place, spite of the occasional presence of "the Holy Father" —and descended by a winding, tortuous path to the shore; for H——s was determined that we should see the Emissary, one of the best preserved and most striking monuments of republican Rome. In vain our "quiet friend" expostulated, for she by no means fancied the climbing. Her voice was lost in the majority; I was for it, and so was Sculpture—three to one—so we carried the day, and down we rapidly descended along a difficult path, escorted by a ragged boy, who amused his leisure time by whooping and screaming in an unintelligible *patois* to his comrades on the opposite shore. After a long and winding descent we rested on the shores of the motionless lake, on an unbroken fringe of the finest turf.

I could have wished to wander for hours on that

peaceful shore, populated by thick-coming fancies and poetic memories; but H——s, now become practical as I had grown fanciful, hurried us on, and we were fain to follow. Vineyards and fruit-gardens skirted the lake, the latter loaded with the delicate pink and white blossoms of the peach, the almond, and the apricot. The water's edge was strewn with stones, among which we picked up specimens of rare marbles and fragments of terra-cotta, evidences of the palaces once inhabited by Pompey and Domitian. Masses, too, of solid foundations and half-sunken walls ran into the lake terrace-wise, showing that these imperial villas, like the modern water-palaces of Como, stood literally on the water.

The fancy might run riot in rebuilding the magnificent edifices which once cast their shadows in these dark waters—Palladian scenes of almost unearthly grandeur! But all is vanished and gone along with the centuries that saw them rise, and the images of the second palaces are effaced like that first abode of the mighty king on the old site of Alba, whose pride brought down the thunder-bolts from heaven!

A large rock juts into the lake; a great tree bends down over the rock, dipping its dark branches into the waters; and a small door appears in an old wall—a suggestive door, that might lead one to Hades, or Lethe,

or Purgatory, or any other terrible and unreal place. The custode, a rough shepherd clothed in goats' skins, was there before us, and had opened it. We passed into an enclosed space, walled in with massive-looking Etruscan blocks of stone matted with ivy, and piled above each other as if the Titans had placed them there, and poised them without cement or mortar. This mysterious *nymphæum*, dark and cool even in the hottest day, filled with the sound of rushing waters, must have been the very trysting-place of the nymphs and sylvan deities. The spirits of the woods and the spirits of the waters, in bygone times, must have met here, and danced many a jocund measure to the sound of reedy pipes. A low arch opposite the entrance, similar in construction to that of the Cloaca Maxima, but infinitely grander and better preserved, spans a rushing, rapid current, clear as crystal, but soon lost under the dark arching recesses beyond. This place recalls those realms of Pluto described by Virgil, whither Æneas, in obedience to the commands of the Sibyl, descended "a cave profound and hideous, with wide-yawning mouth, fenced by a dark lake and the gloom of woods." This was the famous Emissary of the Lake of Albano, and dates back to Rome's early history and the siege of Veii, that obstinate neighbour who for ten years disputed her sway.

After the many episodes in which my subject has tempted me to indulge, I will not particularise that well-known siege, but only recall the prophecy of the old soothsayer, who during the siege, standing on the walls of the rebellious city, declared in derision to the Romans encamped beneath, as he laughed and mocked at them, "that they might think they would take Veii, but that they never should succeed until the waters of the Lake of Alba were all spent, and flowed out into the sea no more." And when the old man was afterwards captured by stratagem, and conducted to the Roman generals, he repeated the same words; because, he said, it was the Fates who prompted him to declare what he spoke, and that, "if the waters ran out into the sea, 'woe is Rome!' but that if they be drawn off, and reach the sea no more, then it is 'woe to Veii!'" So the Romans, unable to comprehend his import, sent to consult the Oracle of Delphi, which agreed in all things with the old man's words. The Romans, therefore, who had been much molested at various times by the capricious rising of the waters within the lake, sent workmen, and bored a passage underground through the hills to the other side, where it emerged, and thus made the waters obedient for watering the lands. So the Emissary was built, and Veii fell; and this far misty legend, and ourselves,

and the nineteenth century, are linked together by that low arch under which runs the rapid current into which, standing on a few rough logs of wood, we gazed!

There is a popular belief prevailing in this locality, similar to that of the Indians on the sacred Ganges, that little barks made of leaves or sticks, balanced with a lighted taper, bring the fulfilment of any special wish breathed over them in a believing spirit by those who confide them to this subterranean current—provided always the tapers are not extinguished so long as the barks remain in sight.

I could not conceive why H——s had so teased and tormented the custode about bringing lights, seeing that the sun shone brightly, and had actually insisted on sending back a *messager* into the town for a bundle of *moccoletti*. Now his purpose was revealed to me, as also the motive of his active and anxious desire to conduct us to the Emissary, spite of the expostulations of our chaperon, who declared that the passage *down* "naturally suggested," as Box says to Cox, "how we *ever* should get *up!*" The little barks were soon laden,—one for S. W——, another for me, and one for H——s,—and sent sailing down the gloomy waters which flowed there centuries before Christianity descended on benighted pagans. The deep low vault and the rapid current received and bore them; and

we watched their passage, and saw that the voyage promised fair, for the lights illumined the dark sides of the water-paved cavern for a long, long while, then dwindled, and at length disappeared. I wonder on what strange shore those little barks have stranded, and if the good spirits that came down to meet them will hear our prayer. H——s was immensely anxious about his; but we each kept our own secret, and none knew the other's wish.

We left this place—the high road, as it were, into a visionary world—and, as "Pilgrim's Progress" says, "addressed ourselves to the ascent"—a labour not easy to accomplish, seeing that the hills are as straight as a house-side, and that, by way of hastening, we chose a path where there was little or no footing. Over stones, and briers, and holes, and rocks we scrambled, sitting down now and then to rest and laugh. At length we reached the summit, breathless and hot, but merry as in the morning when we traversed the Campagna. We gave a look at the Pope's villa—an ugly, staring place, with a grand view over the lake on one hand, and the broad level expanse of sea and Campagna on the other; then seated ourselves in the carriage and wound down a rapid hill; effectually shutting out the lake and all its charms. A delightful drive through the cool evening air brought

us to Rome. We saw the sun set in sheets of gold and saffron over the Mediterranean, the Campagna, and the ruins, in long streaks of glorious light. For a space the very heavens were on fire; then settled down in bars of crimson and deep blood-red. These gradually melted too, and then came pinks, and blues, and purples, reflected on the Sabine Hills, Mount Algidus, ancient Tusculum, and the ruined villas of Cicero, Adrian, and Domitian. Then night—dark, leaden night—gradually spread her sable mantle around, and the stars came out one by one, and the moon rose, and, lighted by her pale crescent, we passed the overarching ruins by the Lateran. What a pleasant day it had been!

XII.

Something about Nuns and Convents—The Quirinale and Pius IX.

I HAD seen a saint made at St. Peter's when I came first to Rome. I have now seen a nun made, and the second ceremony edified me more than the first, because, having deeply studied ecclesiastical Rome, I understood it better. There is a small church on the left hand, descending the hill from the Quattro Fontane towards Santa Maria Maggiore, before whose door we found ourselves at nine o'clock last Sunday morning. Who the tutelary saint of that small church is, no bigger than an "upper chamber," I do not know. Our kind monk, Padre S——, who was waiting to receive us, ushered us in, and placed us close to the altar, which was garlanded, wreathed, and draped with red and white and gold, mixed with flowers and boughs. The floor of the church was also strewed with box and bay leaves, which exhaled an aromatic perfume as the heavy feet of the crowd went and came. We were early: the altar was untenanted, a crimson desk and cushion being placed in front for the officiating cardinal. There was a great

deal of running to and fro; for it seemed a simple, primitive sort of place, unused to such grand and solemn ceremonial. The *custode* (Anglicè "pew-opener"), a little humpty-dumpty woman, looked all cap and ribbons, bustle and confusion. She, and the Swiss guards in their party-coloured uniforms, standing right and left of the altar, were incessantly at cross-purposes, causing the poor little soul to blush deeper and deeper at each fresh mistake. Then there was a naughty little shred of the garment of Aaron, dressed in a surplice, who dodged about in company with another little priestikin, and caused great scandal by the faces they made from behind the altar at each other—an *inconvenance* instantly and sternly checked by a tall and solemn priest, who, laying violent hands on both, drove them ignominiously forth among the crowd. It was a festa—a great festa—and they wanted to enjoy it their own way: the poor things knew no better.

After the pew-opener had rushed about in and out of the crowd many times, putting chairs in impossible places, where they wouldn't stand, and displaying various evidences of a temporary aberration of intellect, a bell sounded lustily—a buzz and hush went round the crowd—the guards opened a passage—and Cardinal M——, a venerable man entirely clothed in red, advanced and knelt on the cushion prepared for him.

He was followed by a suite of gentlemen habited in black, somewhat in the Sir Walter Raleigh style, wearing swords and chains, who, during his orisons, stood around him. After he had risen and taken his place in front of the altar opposite the congregation, two ladies, the Countess M—— and Mrs. S——, wearing veils, advanced, accompanied by priests, and leading by the hand two little children. They took their places on chairs facing the altar. After a pause, and some singing of female voices from behind the altar, four sisters advanced, who, having previously taken the lesser vows, were now to make what is called their profession. They were habited as Sisters of Mercy, wearing black robes, and white linen cloths folded over and about their heads in those indescribable coifs peculiar to nuns. Each bore a lighted candle in her hand. Their eyes were bent on the ground, and they were accompanied by two other elderly sisters, similarly habited, who had already taken the full vows. This solemn funeral procession passed into the enclosure around the altar, each sister making her reverence to the benevolent-looking cardinal seated on his faldstool, the rear being brought up by two lovely children, fair and pure as alabaster, habited as little angels, with draperies of blue over tunics of pale pink, sandals on their feet, and wings covered with feathers on their shoulders. These

little creatures bore each a salver; one containing wreaths of the brightest and freshest flowers, the other crowns of green thorns, their great dagger-points standing out several inches—thorns that recall those encircling the head of the divine "Man of Sorrow," so exquisitely rendered by Guido and Carlo Dolce.

By the time these various groups had ranged themselves around the altar, the sacred space was quite full. It was a rich and varied tableau; the calm, venerable cardinal in the centre; on one side the six nuns, in their dark habits, bearing, as the wise virgins of old, "their lights burning;" on the other, the group of attendant gentlemen and priests; the little angels in their gay draperies; the veiled ladies and their little charges; with the great crimson velvet curtains framing all in heavy folds. Music now burst forth from the hidden choir in joyous strains befitting the happy celebration of the celestial espousals. The cardinal was invested with splendid robes of white and gold, and a jewelled mitre was placed on his head. The ladies (secular) then advanced, and, kneeling at his feet, presented the two children, who received at his hands the consecrated oil on their foreheads—a renewal of the baptismal vows, answering to our own ceremony of confirmation. Oil that has been solemnly blessed can only be used in the most solemn

rites, such as the coronation of sovereigns, the administration of extreme unction, and other exceptional occasions; and is only to be touched by the hands of a priest. A fillet of white silk was then fastened round the heads of the children, which gave them the appearance of early Christian catechumens. At the conclusion of this graceful preface to the other ceremony, the children, and the two ladies who acted as their sponsors, retired to their seats, and were seen no more.

Music broke the pauses, joyous Hallelujahs and Te Deums and Jubilates; amid which songs of praise, the nuns, advancing, kissed the hand of the cardinal. Their confessor, a tall ill-favoured man, who had entered with them and taken his place by the altar, now rose, and in Italian besought the cardinal to permit him to address a few words of exhortation to his spiritual daughters.

Such an occasion would furnish an admirable opportunity for a man of eloquence and intellect to make a splendid discourse, but the *padre* here present was a common, coarse creature, who brawled in a high-pitched voice, like a Presbyterian minister, for about twenty minutes, in praise of virginity and of the sacrifice these *coraggiose giovani*, as he styled them, were about to make, and then sat down. The nuns again advanced opposite to the cardinal, and knelt; the little angels,

who already looked very faint and weary, drew near; and the ceremony proceeded.

I cannot attempt to give all the particulars of this long and complicated service. I notice the salient points only. One nun, representing her fellows—all of whom bore lighted candles of a size much resembling a torch—made a speech in Italian to the cardinal, to the effect that she and her fellows desired to lay aside all worldly pomp, desires, and vanities, and to attach themselves wholly to that Divine Bridegroom who will one day descend to claim his own. They desired to suffer, to obey, to renounce all and everything, for his sake—father and mother and friends—so as to be found of Him. This was all pronounced in a clear, cheerful voice, without any apparent emotion whatever; in fact, it wanted modulation to make it interesting; and great and noble as was the sacrifice they were making, it lacked that poetic charm of melancholy and regret with which the imagination invests a nun's vows, separating her from all she loves in the *visible* world, for the sake and love of that *invisible* country—"that bourne from which no traveller returns"—beyond the skies.

At the close of the nun's oration the cardinal addressed certain questions to them all, and I heard them promise "to go wherever they were sent." What a

world lay in these simple words—the renunciation of what we love next to life, our liberty—"to go whither they were sent." Poor souls! what a vow, and what fortitude would be required to fulfil it, when we remember that these, being Sisters of Mercy, would be employed in nursing the sick! "To go whither they are sent," into contagion, filth, sorrow, and death—to minister to the wants of the suffering wretch that the world disowns—to receive his last sigh—to close his starting eyes! Oh, holy and sacred vocation, when sincerely fulfilled! Surely your treasure will be "where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt," if—O frail sisters!—ye are enabled steadfastly to keep these vows. Their lights burnt brightly now, and all looked fair for the weary journey. But who knows?

The cardinal then took a large pair of scissors from off the altar, and cut from the head of each a handful of hair, which he presented to them. Receiving the hair from him, they cast it from them with these words, pronounced in clear, round, unhesitating accents: "*Rinunzio al mondo e a tutte le sue vanità.*" There was almost *hate* and *defiance* in the tone and the action, as though the thought of this world was sin, and pain, and sorrow; but no one present could for a moment question its entire sincerity—it was the free, sponta-

neous expression of the internal essence. The cardinal then addressed them in Italian.

"*Mie sorelle,*" said he, "you have chosen, like Mary, the 'better part;' you will be the brides of that unseen and eternal Bridegroom whose coming the Church militant earnestly awaits. Will you, like Him, choose the crown of thorns, or will you prefer the chaplet of flowers? Here are both. I desire that you make your choice."

The little angels now advanced, bearing each their salver.

"*Eminentissimo,*" replied the nun who had all along acted as spokeswoman, "we only wish in all things to follow the example of our Divine Lord; we beseech the blessed Virgin, *Maria Santissima,* and all the saints to help us in this our resolve. Like Jesus, we desire to wear the crown of thorns, which we now take."

Each advanced, and taking a crown of thorns from off the salver, two elder sisters fixed it on the top of their white coifs. Bearing these marks of our Saviour's agony, they had accomplished the symbolic rites of the Church, and had become eternally dedicated to Him in time as in eternity. They kissed the hand of the cardinal, then tenderly saluted each other; and, after listening to some more joyous music from the invisible choir in celebration of the mystic espousals, they

withdrew as they had come. I could see them well as they passed out. Some were strikingly handsome, young, and of that classic type which reminds one of the antique, with grand massive features, and deep, dark, glancing eyes, only to be seen in the South—profound, fathomless, glorious, as the depths of their own blue heavens! Peace go with the holy maids, and joy in the great vineyard of the Lord, whither they were bound; and may they never repent those solemn oaths, chronicled by the Church in our hearing!

"*Ahi, poverine!*" exclaimed that excellent creature, Padre S——, when all was over. "*Dio li protegge!* What a life—what sacrifices! *Ah, chi lo sa!*" And his honest eyes ran over with tears, for he—a monk of Valombrosa—*knew* what it was to take up that Cross here below, and wreathe it with flowers of humility and resignation, when it is most heavy and most bitter.

The church of San Antonio, on the Esquiline, is known to every one as the place where the animals are blessed. It is also well known to Romans as the convent where are manufactured the palms used by the Pope and cardinals in the high mass at St. Peter's on Palm Sunday. This year no less than twelve hundred were woven out of the *canne*, or reeds (growing in waving forests on the banks of rivers and in marshy

places), by the industrious nuns, who, living under what is called *clausura*, can never leave their monastery like the free, but certainly more heroic, "Sisters of Mercy."

Padre S—— took us to see the great palm made for the Pope, and sent to him every year from San Antonio. He, poor man, was in ecstasy over its elegance and fancy. If it had been a rare *cinque-cento* toy worked by the hand of the immortal Cellini, he could not have more extolled it. It certainly was wonderful how the conceits and fancies of grapes, and wheat-ears, and leaves, and flowers, could all be cut out of hard round reeds; but the design was poor and confused, and the introduction of artificial flowers into the festoons gave the whole a tawdry appearance. It was a huge thing, nearly six feet high, meant, of course, only for ornament.

But what engaged me much more than the palm was a sight we saw in the interior of the cloister, whither, thanks to our tonsured friend (who is the confessor of these good sisters), we had penetrated. There was a small table immediately below a heavy double-iron grating, shaped like a window in the wall. At this table sat an elderly man of the working class and a boy. Behind the grating, and distinctly visible, was a real "cloistered nun," conversing with these her relatives, and all the while busily plying her fingers in

weaving, and cutting, and twisting a palm for the coming festa. Her figure and head were wrapped in a mantle of black serge; her face was enclosed in a close-setting coif. She was young, and positively *beautiful.* Fresh roses mantled in her cheeks, and her eyes quite pierced the envious iron bars. She looked gay, smiling, and happy, and was conversing on evidently cheerful and animating subjects in a low voice with her relatives. I could scarcely take my eyes from her—she seemed positively to irradiate the gloomy precincts around her. Padre S—— informed me that nuns are at all times permitted thus to meet and freely converse with friends and relatives.

"But," said I, "should they *abuse* the indulgence, what then?"

"Oh!" said he, "that rarely occurs; but in such a case the abbess would interfere and admonish the sister. Would you like to see the mother-superior?"

"Oh, extremely!"

"Well, you shall see her; for she is *una buonissima creatura e molto mia amica.*"

So we passed into an inner room, and sat down before precisely such another little table, under just such a double grating. As Padre S—— passed the lovely nun, she respectfully rose and saluted him. This attention was shown by virtue of his office of confessor

to the community. After waiting some time, a little old wrinkled woman, bent nearly double by age, emerged from the dark recesses beyond, like some fairy of the good old days. Her countenance, though extremely aged, expressed mildness and amiability. She saluted us kindly, and seemed quite delighted at our praises of the Pope's great palm.

"*Si,*" replied she, "*un bel lavoro molto bravo.*"

We had not many subjects in common, especially as the good old lady declined to consider us *Christians;* but we got on very tolerably notwithstanding. She looked at our children and asked their ages, and admired them —until, quite ashamed of martyrising her any longer, I begged to *levarle l'incomodo* (as the Romans say), and withdrew. Certainly my impression of the nuns of San Antonio is that they are cheerful, happy, and in the enjoyment of all becoming freedom.

Many of the boasted hills of Rome exist but in name, or in the excited imaginations of antiquarians; but the Quirinale is really a respectable and visible eminence, conspicuous from all quarters of the city. Baths and temples decorated its base. A temple to the Fidius Dius (or of good faith) is particularly mentioned—a deity with a horn—with whom, assuredly, the Romans had very small dealings. On the summit, near the site of the very magnificent but

small church of St. Andrew, belonging to the Jesuits, rose the stately temple of Quirinus, dedicated to Romulus. When that unprincipled, though fortunate, founder of young Rome had established his brigand dominion over a motley collection of exiles, refugees, thieves, and murderers, gathered by promises of refuge, and certainty of warlike spoils from all parts of Italy, he suddenly, after a long and prosperous reign, disappeared from the presence of the multitude during an assembly of the people without the city. The heavens darkened, clouds gathered over his throne, a blackness as of night obscured the day, and thunder and loud winds burst forth, as if announcing some tremendous convulsion of Nature. When the tempest passed and the light reappeared Romulus was gone.

The people declared that he had been murdered, but the priests and patricians maintained that he was caught up to heaven, and that it behoved the quirites and plebs to worship him as a god. The question was satisfactorily settled by the credulity or ingenuity of a certain Alban, Julius Proculus by name, descended from Ascanius, the founder of the "Long White City," who affirmed that on his way to the Forum, Romulus had met him, ennobled and dazzling in countenance, and arrayed in radiant armour. Julius, astonished at the apparition, thus addressed it: "For what mis-

behaviour of ours, O king! or by what accident have you so untimely left us in utter calamity, and sunk the whole city in inexpressible sorrow?" To which the shade graciously replied, "It pleased the gods, my good Proculus, that for awhile I should dwell with men and found a great and glorious city, and afterwards return to the heavens from whence I came. Farewell. Go tell the Romans that by the exercise of temperance and fortitude they shall attain the highest pitch of human greatness, and I, the god Quirinus, will ever be propitious to them."

Thus spoke the unrighteous murderer of his brother, and disappeared. So a temple was built, and the royal impostor Romulus was deified and honoured under the name of *Quirites*, as a martial or warrior god; and the hill was called Quirinus on which his temple stood, and is so named even to this day. But these uncertain and allegorical chronicles of a dim and misty antiquity all vanish before the glorious *coup d'œil* of our own day, or but lend a graceful legendary character to one of the most striking scenes in the Eternal City.

On the summit of the height appears the magnificent fountain of Monte Cavallo, so named from the horses and their godlike leaders, Castor and Pollux. The names of Phidias and Praxiteles are engraven on the pedestals, and antiquarians agree that they are of

Grecian workmanship. Their exquisite classical beauty is, at all events, beyond dispute. Between them rises an obelisk of red granite, brought from the mausoleum of Augustus, where it had been placed to commemorate some Egyptian triumph of Rome's first great emperor. That obelisk, bathed in the sunlight, carries back one's mind to the burning sand-deserts bordering the Nile, and to gigantic temples and mysterious rites of which Herodotus himself could not write without trembling. Now its base is bathed by a pure and delicious fountain. Beyond are churches and edifices bordering the ample piazza. In one corner we catch a glimpse of the Rospigliosi Palace, embowered in trees; opposite rise the walls of the Colonna Gardens, overmantling with verdure and loading the air with the perfume of roses and orange groves, under whose shade the Papal cavalry are wont to meet, groom their horses, sing martial songs, and swear "in very choice Italian" as unconcernedly as if the ground they stood on was not consecrated by world-wide legends of the classic past.

On the opposite side, facing the fountain, extends the vast palace of the Quirinale,* crowning the hill like a diadem, and descending through whole streets in its interminable length. It impresses the imagination from

* Now the palace of the King of United Italy.

the very simplicity of its architecture, so essentially different from the florid magnificence prevailing at the Vatican. It was at the Quirinale, built by Paul III. and Gregory XIII., that the conclaves of the Sacred College always assembled; and at that window which one sees conspicuous over the grand entrance the new Pope was presented to the Roman people. A place renowned as the scene where the ancient Romans worshipped the temporal power of their deified king, and the Catholic world for ages received its chief, must demand from me some few details.

When the Pope is dead, the cardinal-chamberlain knocks three times at the door of his chamber, calling on him by his Christian and family name, and his title as Pope. After a pause he turns to the attendant clergy and notaries, saying, "Dunque è morto" ("He is then dead"). The fisherman's ring is taken from his finger and broken in pieces; the great bell of the Capitol tolls, and the bells of every one of the innumerable churches in Rome respond to its deep and solemn note. The Sacred College of Cardinals meanwhile assembles, whilst the body of the deceased pontiff is exposed to the sight of the people who come and kiss his feet.

On the ninth day the cardinals meet in the Quirinale chapel, where the psalm, "Veni, Creator," is sung. The immense extent of the palace on this side,

running down the Via Pia to the Quattro Fontane, is entirely divided into little suites of chambers, inhabited only on these solemn occasions, when, in order to prevent any possibility of communication from without during the sitting of the conclave, the cardinals are confined there until after the election of a new pope. Each room contains a bed, a few chairs, and a table. The cardinal princes once installed in these dismal little cells, which are hung with green serge, the doors of the palace are walled up, as are also the windows, except one pane, just sufficient to admit a gloomy light into the conclave.

The Prince of Savelli, by virtue of an hereditary privilege, keeps the gates, and provisions are conveyed to the cardinals and their attendants by means of revolving circular cupboards, such as one sees used in convents. There are confessors, doctors, surgeons, two barbers, and a carpenter, also shut up. The cardinals rise at six o'clock, when a bell rings, and a voice is heard in the long corridors calling out, "Ad capellam Domini."

The election, which takes place in the chapel, is by ballot; the great powers of Catholic Europe having each the power of a single veto against any single cardinal, but no more. When the number of votes makes it evident who will be elected, a bell sounds, and the

name of the chosen cardinal is pronounced aloud. He is then asked if he accepts the election, on responding to which demand in the affirmative (for history informs us of no pontiff who ever refused the proffered honour), the cardinals fall back respectfully, leaving him alone. He then announces by what appellation he intends to reign, it having been the custom for the popes to change their names at their election ever since the time of Sergius IV., who, being christened *Peter*, declined to bear the name given by Christ to the first among the Apostles. The new Pope is then arrayed in white and crimson, red embroidered shoes bearing the cross are put on his feet, the cardinals kiss the cross, and he is invested with the fisherman's ring.

The "Ecce Sacerdos Magnus" is then sung by the fine Papal choir, unaccompanied by instrumental music, and the cardinal-deacon, preceded by the mason, the carpenter, and the master of the ceremonies, proceeds to the window in the Loggia over the grand entrance to announce to the people the election of the Pope.

An immense multitude inundates the piazza. The windows, the roofs are one moving mass of human beings, ebbing and flowing like the stormy waves of an angry sea. All Rome is there, the plebeian and the patrician, brought together by one common sentiment

of intense curiosity. Cries and screams announce the excitable nature of the fiery Italians. They can brook no delay—the cardinal is too long in coming—the carpenter is a *birbante*, and they curse the mason, and send him to the infernal gods of both ancient and modern Erebus for his laziness. "*Ci vuol il nostro Papa. Facci vedere il nostro Papa!*" "We must see him! Give us our Pope!" thunders on all sides. The smaller *canaille* mount sacrilegiously on the beauteous statues of Castor and Pollux, bestride the Grecian steeds without ceremony, and fling around the water from the basin on the crowd who cannot escape, crying out to be shown their Pope. The guards, in this moment of interregnum, are of no avail; they are mocked at and disregarded. They, too, end by joining in the cry of "*Il Papa—il nuovo Papa!*" It is a moment of thrilling interest, of dramatic suspense. Suddenly there is a great pause. A silence, a stillness as of death, falls on that assembled multitude. The wall of brick that built up the window totters, falls with a crash, the cardinal-deacon stands forth on the Loggia, and the last notes of the soft music of the choir are heard dying away in the distance. At the sight of the cardinal there is a hush. The crowd trembles, rushes forward, and then again is still. A religious silence reigns.

"I announce to you," says his Eminence, "joyful tidings: the Most Eminent and Reverend Cardinal N——, having taken the name of ——, is elected Pope."

The piazza resounds with enthusiastic roars, shouts, and cries of delight and triumph; the silver trumpets sound clear and pure above the riot; the great guns of Castel San Angelo bang forth their iron bolts; and every fort in Rome unites in chorus with the deep harmonious sound of the great bell of St. Peter's and the bells of every other church in the city.

In the midst of this exulting jubilee, when earth calls on the mighty echoes of the mountains and the high vault of heaven to respond to and participate in its joy, the father of the Catholic world himself appears on the balcony, and indulges the enthusiasm of a delirious people by his presence. When Pius IX. was elected, his tender heart was so overcome by these overwhelming greetings, that he actually burst into a flood of tears, and was removed fainting from the Loggia. But the people have not yet done. After the Pope withdraws, they rush forward, and, by virtue of an ancient privilege, proceed to the interior of the palace where the conclave sat, seize on everything they can find as their lawful booty, and cause a general havoc and confusion, until the illumination of the city calls off the up-

roarious rabble to a wider arena wherein to *sfogare* their boiling passions.

It was from this historic window that Pius IX. was in the habit of showing himself to the enthusiastic Romans at the period of his wild popularity, when they called him forth to heap blessings on his head, to applaud and cheer him for the boon of liberty his government insured them. Here he received all the ovations which an excited and grateful nation are capable of rendering. Sometimes he was called forth in rain and wind, and came, obedient to their wishes, to gratify them by his presence, and dispense blessings around—blessings of price, coming from a good and a Christian man who lives near his God. Those two short years saw many thrilling scenes of love, devotion, and enthusiasm, many gorgeous pageants, many soul-inspiring services, when the temporal and spiritual powers invested in the beloved Pope seemed to render him more than mortal in the eyes of his people. But the dark days came; the chord was too tightly drawn —it needs must slacken. The excellent and saintly man, in his simple-hearted goodness, granted weighty reforms too rapidly and readily. The excited people, finding they had but to ask, grew senseless and unreasonable, and desired that Pius should head a red republic—a moral chaos. The fickle population, accustomed to action and

excitement, could brook no repose — pageants, *feste*, and sights must amuse them, laws be destroyed, and new concessions keep their minds on fire. The Pope, unconscious of the gulf opening beneath him, confident in his people's affection and his own justice and rectitude, for a time headed the course of events, flung himself in the rushing tide of the changing time, and endeavoured to please every party by his compliance, his mercy, and forbearance. But it would not do; he could not conscientiously, and he would not wrongfully, answer the expectations of a licentious and now brutalised populace. He would have secured their freedom, but they yelled for anarchy. The wild flames of revolution of the tremendous '48 were abroad, and soon reached the walls of the ancient queen of cities.

The people, finding that, *reformer* though he was, Pius would never become a *revolutionist*, came to hate their idol, and sought to tear him down from the household altars which they had reared to him. Oh! a sad and melancholy epic, full of deep pathos and powerful phases of passion, is the history of those brief two years of his happy sovereignty! But it was soon past, and its pleasant and beneficent memories were trodden rudely under foot. Then came the senseless and cruel murder of Count Rossi at the Palazzo della Cancelleria—that patriotic and enlightened minister who was the temporal

support of the Papal throne. Then came rumours of war and danger and rebellion. The same people who had once so loved him, now gazed at the Pope in stern and ominous silence. Then came the attack on the Quirinale, where he lived—the brutal attack on the sovereign who would have spent himself for the people God had placed him to rule over. Then he was no longer safe in once happy Rome; for a republic was to be established, and, save the Swiss guard—faithful as steel—he was alone and undefended. Then came the flight. Then he passed out of the great portal (where first he had been saluted by the unstable Romans) disguised as a priest, and accompanied by the Bavarian ambassador—Count Spaur—and then fled over the frontiers to Mola di Gaeta, where he was received by the King of Naples, and lived many long months in a kind of splendid captivity.

Another Pope, years ago, was dragged from the Quirinale, which would seem fatal to the Papal power, by a different, though not less brutal, act of violence, when General Radet, the envoy of Napoleon, scaled the garden walls at the head of a band of soldiers, and at three o'clock in the morning forced his way into the sleeping-room of the venerable Pius VII. They obliged him to rise, dress, and accompany them, with his faithful minister, Cardinal Pacca, to a carriage in waiting, and thus in

the silence of the night bore off the Pope a prisoner. After driving some time towards Florence, the Pope asked Cardinal Pacca if he had brought with him any money. "Your Holiness knows," said he, "I was dragged out of my apartment as you were from yours, and had no opportunity of taking anything." On searching their purses they found nothing but a few *bajocchi* (pence). "See," exclaimed Pius VII., "all that remains to me of my kingdom!"

I have been led to greater length than I had intended in recounting the vicissitudes recalled by the Quirinale; and I must now relate my own impressions when I yesterday visited that interesting palace. I entered by the portal under that same historic window in the front of the palace. An enormous *cortile* occupies the centre of the building, surrounded by a fine arcade, from which grand marble staircases ascend. This *cortile* was as public as the streets when the Pope inhabited the palace (which he generally left about the month of July, when the air becomes unwholesome); and although the party-coloured Swiss guard used ostentatiously to parade up and down, bearing their halberds, all the dirty little boys of the quarter found a convenient playground in the cool shade of the pillared corridors. The *bocchi* balls rolled; and that everlasting game with their fingers, "*Uno, duè, trè,*" which the Italians do really seem to under-

stand from the very hour of their birth, proceeded unmolested. Now and then, when a cardinal or a monsignore appeared, they would stare, stand aside, and then begin again, nothing abashed.

On mounting a fine staircase, we entered a nobly-proportioned hall richly decorated with frescoes, from whence opens the chapel where the conclave for the election of the popes is held, and where the dove is said to descend on the head of the elected cardinal. These mysterious precincts are not, however, visible to strangers. Three ante-rooms lined with beautiful marbles are next passed, ending in a kind of corridor lighted by a spacious window looking out to the front of the palace. This is the window so celebrated in Papal history as the scene of such varied events, and which, during the sitting of the conclave, is walled up. Beyond is a splendid apartment lined with fine Gobelin tapestry representing subjects from our Saviour's life, and opening into a still grander hall, furnished in a similar manner, but more resplendent with gold and coloured marbles, where, under a canopy of crimson velvet, the popes gave audience to crowned heads and magnates of the highest rank. The chairs are of wood, and without cushions, as no one, of whatever rank, is permitted a more comfortable seat while in the presence of his Holiness, who is, however, himself accommodated with a

most luxurious *poltrona* (literally an idle-chair). Conspicuous in every room are placed one if not two superbly-carved crucifixes of gold, ebony, ivory, and precious gems—striking mementoes in these gilded saloons. Next in order comes another audience-room of smaller dimensions, but still superb; and so on and on to a snug little boudoir, or writing-room, where the Pope's arm-chair is still prepared under a velvet canopy, before a table on which stands a large crucifix. Shelves surround the room, curtained with crimson silk; that colour also prevailing in the Pope's bedroom—a nice quiet little room, where the Vicar of Christ upon earth lays him down to rest on a small brass bedstead, screened with curtains of red silk. Two or three diminutive chests of drawers, a sofa, and a few chairs constitute all the furniture. A *bénitier* for holy water hangs against the wall. A *prie-dieu* desk for private devotion, and some crucifixes and religious ornaments, complete the arrangements of the room. Nothing can be more simple; it would rival in plainness the bedroom of the great Duke at Walmer. It may not be generally known that Pius began life as a soldier, and belonged for many years to the Guardia Nobile, whose especial province it is to guard the person of the pontiff, whom they never quit day or night, but sleep outside the door of his chamber. The late

Pope, Gregory, perceiving his vocation for a religious life, advised Pius to renounce the military career, which he accordingly did, and was ordained a priest, taking part soon after in a missionary expedition to South America. Perhaps few modern popes have known so much of real practical work as Pius. I have before mentioned the charming and benignant expression of his countenance. His features are good, and although beaming with unmistakable kindness, convey nothing vulgar or trivial. It is a fine, solid-looking head, with grey hair cut *à la* Titus. In his busts, otherwise remarkably like him, one misses the placid and affectionate expression of his black eyes, which diffuse a calm peacefulness that must be felt even by those most inclined to dispute his influence. In manner he is kind, though quiet and reserved. He rises at half-past six in the morning, and, which is extraordinary in an Italian, shaves himself; for he dislikes unnecessary attendance. His toilet over, he says mass alone in his private chapel, and hears another in public afterwards. This is to Pius the most solemn and important act of his life. At half-past eight he has fulfilled his pontifical duties and fortified his soul by prayer and communion. His mind is now free and disengaged for the labours of the day. A light breakfast of coffee and a few biscuits follows, according to the Italian fashion,

and then begin his various avocations — Maestri di Camera, Camerieri Segreti, ministers of state, cardinals, prefects, and ambassadors now crowd the antechambers, and are received by him without distinction.

In many of the saloons there are good pictures, principally of the Decadence; but I was particularly struck by the principal chapel, painted entirely in fresco by Guido and Albano. It is quite a little *bijou*—so fresh and glowing, one might fancy the colours but of yesterday. A large altar-piece of the Annunciation is, to my thinking, one of the most perfect and exquisite works of Guido, although Rome boasts such matchless and numerous specimens of his skill.

After passing these suites of rooms we reached the Pope's dining-room—a quiet, unadorned apartment, where he eats alone under the eternal *baldacchino*, with a crucifix placed opposite. Ever since the too worldly repasts of Leo X. it has been etiquette for the popes to dine alone, in the most simple and frugal manner. It is the highest honour for reigning sovereigns to be admitted to the Papal table, and one rarely accorded. At Castello, or elsewhere, during the *villeggiatura*, when etiquette is somewhat relaxed, a few cardinals and prelates are sometimes, but rarely, invited. Pius's dinner is said to cost only one *scudo* (about five shillings), and to be discussed in twenty minutes, during which short

time he converses with the secretary of state. After dinner, like a true Italian, the Pope retires to his room and takes a short siesta. Then he drives out, and when without the walls alights to walk on the public road.

The windows of the Quirinale overlook delicious gardens which slope down the steep sides of Monte Cavallo and are divided into stately terraces by high clipped hedges of yew and evergreen oak, bordered by statues and Termini. Bright fountains, *jets d'eau*, and bright parterres of flowers enliven the centre of each division. Under these dark cypress groves and ilex-trees a perpetual coolness reigns; massive sculptured balustrades edge the hill, and long flights of marble steps descend to sequestered shrubberies below, whence winding paths conduct to springs and cascades gushing from rocky banks—an elegant, though somewhat gloomy, plaisance, well adapted to the tonsured grandees for whose enjoyment it was designed.

END OF VOL. I.

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